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What is CBIT and how does it differ from Habit Reversal Therapy (HRT)?

CBIT (Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention for Tics) is based on HRT—a behavioral treatment that has been studied and in use for many, many years. However, CBIT includes a number of methods that are not part of HRT but rather are specific to TS. For instance CBIT focuses primarily on increasing an awareness of tics and teaching individuals how to perform a competing behavior just when they sense the tic symptoms are about to occur.

Also, those who undergo this training are encouraged to become aware of and avoid tic-worsening triggers such as certain places, specific activities or even other

people who might cause them stress. Once these triggers are recognized and avoided individuals can experience a decrease in symptoms. Participants in the CBIT program (both those with TS and their families) are also exposed to a great deal of education about tic disorders.

We've always been told that TS symptoms are neurological in nature and therefore occur involuntarily. If this is true, then how is it that tics are controllable and can be reduced with this treatment?

It's important to be very clear on this point. There is absolutely no doubt that tics ARE neurological in nature, and surely no one with a tic disorder chooses to have these symptoms. We also know that

people with tics can hold back their tics, at least for short periods of time. What CBIT attempts to do is to teach children and adults with TS strategies they can use to successfully manage their tics when they feel the need to do so.

What can someone with TS expect in the way of results?

The results from our large, multi-site, NIMH/TSA funded CBIT studies are not yet finalized. However, based on data from earlier research in the field, we can predict that about 60% of people who go through CBIT will derive significant benefit in terms of reduced symptoms and the ability to function at an improved level.



Is total control of tics and other TS symptoms ever a realistic objective?

The complete elimination of all tics and other TS symptoms does happen occasionally in CBIT, but it is a very rare occurrence. We certainly do not view CBIT as a 'cure' for TS. Rather, we view CBIT as a tool, quite like a medication that people can use to help them better manage their symptoms ■