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SECTION ONE

1 Tics and triggers: The basics. 7

The number of people dealing with tics has skyrocketed over the last few decades. In this chapter you will learn about the three main types of tics being experienced, and which conventional efforts are being used to control symptoms. Find out what triggers are, and why most people do not know about allergic, dietary, and environmental triggers for tics, even though an awareness of them could change their lives for the better.

2 The importance of trigger lists. 17

It is common practice for doctors to discuss triggers for certain medical conditions with their patients. For example, heat can cause hives, excessive caffeine can trigger a seizure, paint thinner fumes can cause a migraine, and a virus or spicy foods might trigger a flare-up of Crohn's disease in someone with the condition. Knowing about potential triggers gives patients a starting point when exploring factors that may be affecting their symptoms. Read how this applies to tics.

3 The gift of discovering triggers: My story 25

When you repeatedly witness that a certain food, toxin, scent or allergen aggravates tics, you know the connection is real. This is the case regardless of what your doctor or the medical literature says based on conventional thought. When triggers are removed and tics consistently improve, you have an increased motivation to continue with your efforts. My young son's amazing recovery from Tourette syndrome is shared here with the hope that it helps advance the understanding and treatment of tic conditions.

4 Allergic, dietary, and environmental impacts on tics . . .33

Many people dealing with tic disorders have been led to believe that their condition is simply genetic, but this is not true. The environment, diet, and allergens affect diverse health problems, and tics are among them. In this chapter, you will be updated on new findings and insights, and you will learn how this information could benefit you.

SECTION TWO

5 Advice from the tic community49

When the Association for Comprehensive NeuroTherapy (ACN): *Latitudes.org* began more than twenty-five years ago, it represented a small number of families and physicians. At the time, reports of successful treatment of tics without the use of conventional medication were often shrugged off by skeptics as a coincidence, or as a spontaneous remission of symptoms. Over the years, the number of people sharing similar successful experiences related to triggers and the resolution of tics has grown tremendously. A sampling of reports is included here. Each account in this chapter is specific to the writer's situation, yet, taken as a whole, they highlight the fact that allergy, diet, and the environment can play a major role in tic development and expression.

SECTION THREE

6 Where is the research?81

An appalling lack of research for tics and Tourette syndrome on critical topics—including diet, allergy, the environment, triggers in general, and pesticides—is highlighted in this chapter. These same issues have received considerable scrutiny for related medical conditions. Given the lack of substantial progress made to date in the field of tic disorders, relevant areas such as these clearly need to receive focused scientific attention.

7 Types of tic triggers87

Our organization’s ground-breaking survey paved the way for the first published comprehensive trigger list for tics. Since then, we have continued to collect trigger feedback, and this information, combined with our previous list, is featured in this chapter. The types of triggers have been broken down into categories: lifestyle, sensory influences, food and drink, toxins and allergens, physical imbalances, and weather.

8 How can there be so many triggers?. 95

It would be convenient if there were only a few potential triggers for tics. But that is not the case. Instead, a variety of foods, allergens, and chemical exposures can aggravate the nervous system. Learn different theories on why there are so many potential tic triggers.

SECTION FOUR

9 The ethics of ignoring triggers for tics.103

There is something wrong when patients with tics are offered deep-brain stimulation with surgically implanted electrodes, and strong drugs with potential side effects, yet they have not been informed that something as simple as diet, or chemical exposures, or allergens may be affecting their symptoms. This approach needs to change, and those responsible for the current status held accountable.

10 Tricky triggers113

Perhaps you thought you had zeroed in on a trigger, but then something happens and your thinking is turned upside-down. Or, maybe an influence you had never considered now looks like a new trigger. Challenges like these are common when conducting a search. Ideas for approaching your detective work are shared.

11 After identifying triggers121

The goal of a trigger search is to identify problems so you can avoid them in the future. Figuring out the triggers is one thing—avoiding them is something else! Use suggestions in this chapter to get a better handle on this important phase in your efforts.

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12 Get help: Trigger-Resources webpages129

We have created several free tools to help with your trigger investigations. Whether you are exploring this area for yourself or for a loved one, having relevant links, practitioner information, logs for adults and teens, and incentive charts for use with children can make a positive difference in your efforts. Details on the special web resource pages, developed as a supplement to this book, are given.

13 How you can help this effort161

Please see our list in this chapter of ways you can help spread the word about triggers for tics and Tourette’s. We need your support to strengthen this vital message, promote research, and increase the impact of the work of our nonprofit organization.

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