

Stopping a Tic in its Tracks: A Mother's Mission

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This inspiring letter was received by Sheila Rogers DeMare, director of ACN, from a mother in Ohio.

My son Cole had a brief experience with an eye-blinking tic at age five, and happily we saw no more tics for about three years. Then, a neck tic surfaced with a vengeance. My beautiful son was jerking his neck over a thousand times a day. Day after day after day. I took him to his pediatrician in search of relief. He suggested standard medication to subdue the tics. But, like many parents, I had read up on the side-effects of these strong drugs and declined. I had seen the Latitudes.org website and wanted to try other approaches without drugs.

I ordered your book, [Natural Treatments for Tics and Tourette's](#). I was so anxious for help that when it arrived I read it in one day. I started many of the modifications you recommended right away, and would like to share the positive results we have had.

Rather than experiment with one approach and then another, we made significant changes all at once, hoping that later we could find out which ones were the most important for Cole, and then we could loosen up on those things he could tolerate.

Step One: Making the changes

His diet: I immediately changed his diet. We eliminated all wheat and dairy products. This included cheese, one of his favorite foods. I also decided to eliminate his daily "Juicy Juice" and all kinds of sweets — these are things he really loves. (Editor: While Juicy Juice does not have added sweeteners, 8-ounces contains 26 grams of natural sugar; further, some kids may be sensitive to specific fruits in the drink.) No artificial sweeteners, colors or flavoring were permitted, and all other chemical additives were also cut out.

1. **Toxins and odors:** I did my best to eliminate Cole's exposure to strong odors, for example scented candles (one of my favorite things!), chemical cleaners, smoke from outside fires or grills, etc.

2. **Hand sanitizer:** After reading your book I realized the use of Cole's hand sanitizer had to stop. We'd been applying it frequently because of the swine flu scare. We had started using it shortly before his neck tics began.
3. **TV and Video:** We undertook the biggest challenge here: no TV or video games, period. Cole had the most trouble with this one! Like other boys his age, he loves TV and video games of all sorts. But I talked to him about the modifications and he was willing to do whatever it took to try and stop the neck tic.

The first morning, with the modified diet and no TV or video games, he did not tic one time. By 3:30 in the afternoon, the tics started up but they were not as frequent. I will be honest, I was shocked that the changes we had made worked so quickly. Some clues as to why this may have happened: Cole's typical morning included Juicy Juice, pancakes and maple syrup with artificial ingredients, and time with the TV and games. Cutting these all out together made a difference right away.

The next day Cole told me that he only noticed his neck tic about 15 times. Each day the symptoms tapered off until by day eight the tic was completely gone.

Step Two: Checking for the triggers

Of course, we didn't want to stay on this strict system forever if we didn't have to. I started adding foods back into his diet one at a time to watch for any reaction. First bread, then cheese, etc. We have been able to broaden Cole's diet, but he still does not drink Juicy Juice, and he is hardly allowed any sugary foods. I keep dairy to a minimum. TV and video games are allowed for limited time periods. I have added more protein to his diet and reduced the carbs. I am also incorporating more nutritious foods such as almonds and vegetables, and am focusing on magnesium-rich foods. And we continue to avoid all artificial additives.

I will never again use strong chemicals or candles in my house.

We went more than three weeks with no tics at all. I was so happy I can't even begin to tell you.

Step Three: A birthday test

Well, soon after this exciting progress it was Cole's birthday. For a celebration, and without giving it a lot of thought, I planned a trip to an indoor water park. As soon as we walked in

and I smelled the strong chlorine and other pool chemicals I knew it had been a mistake. I didn't want to ruin his special day by leaving. Instead, I just tried to minimize his time in the water, focusing on rides and other activities at the indoor park. But there was no getting around it, the chemical exposure was significant. On top of this, I let him enjoy sugary treats and dairy products — some regular party foods.

I thought we'd gotten away with our adventure, but it wasn't long before he started rubbing his eyes and complaining that they felt "heavy." A mild eye tic started up in one eye; most people would not have noticed it. Back at home, I knew I had to tighten up on his diet again and we did. It's been one week now since the party and the eye tic has almost completely subsided.

This experience helped confirm my understanding of how triggers can affect tics. I know the pattern of tics has not been a coincidence or simply "waxing and waning" as some say.

My son has had chemical sensitivities and allergies for many years. Before reading the *Natural Treatments for [Tics and Tourette's book](#)* I would never have guessed these conditions could have been connected to the tics he has experienced.

In closing

My heart goes out to every child with a tic disorder, and to every mother and father who has to watch their child go through this pain. Someday soon I hope that Tourette's and tics will be eliminated for everyone.

While we all search for the day when no child has to worry about the next tic, I will be praying for peace, peace for the children and for their families.

Note: Name and actual image were withheld at the family's request.

The nonprofit Association for Comprehensive Therapy (ACN) publishes the website [Latitudes.org](#). ACN focuses on finding and sharing advanced and natural therapies for neurological conditions.