

Symposium | Neurodevelopmental disorder : [Symposium 112] A Multidimensional Approach to Tourette Syndrome in Japan and Korea

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[Symposium 112] A Multidimensional Approach to Tourette Syndrome in Japan and Korea

Moderator: Yukiko Kano (The University of Tokyo), Jin-Hwa Moon (Hanyang University)

[SY-112-03] An Empirical Study on Self-Coping Strategies for Tics in Tourette Syndrome: Focusing on Premonitory Urges and the Semi-Voluntary Nature of Tics

*Natsumi Matsuda^{1,2} (1. Shirayuri University (Japan), 2. The University of Tokyo (Japan))

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This presentation summarizes a comprehensive research project on self-coping strategies for tics in individuals with Tourette Syndrome (TS), based on a doctoral dissertation. TS is characterized by semi-voluntary motor and vocal tics often preceded by premonitory urges. Patients commonly engage in self-coping to manage symptoms, yet little is known about the nature or effectiveness of such strategies. The project incorporated **quantitative studies, qualitative research, and behavioral experiments** to explore self-coping in depth. Questionnaire data from over 100 individuals with TS revealed that suppressive coping is frequently used, but it often causes discomfort and is difficult to sustain over time. **Qualitative interviews** with individuals with TS generated six categories of self-coping, and two key hypotheses emerged: (1) that tics must be released to alleviate discomfort, and (2) that attention exacerbates tics. These beliefs were further tested in **behavioral experiments** using ABAB designs and physiological recordings, showing that premonitory urges do not consistently increase with suppression or focused attention, except in severe obsessive-compulsive cases. The findings also identified contextual factors—such as emotional regulation, acceptance, and supportive environments—that enhance coping effectiveness. Age differences in coping styles and their impact on quality of life were also observed. Synthesizing these results, a new cognitive-behavioral model was proposed, highlighting how beliefs about tic-related urges and attentional focus may influence the persistence or worsening of symptoms. This study offers novel clinical implications for supporting more adaptive, personalized coping strategies in TS, and emphasizes the importance of understanding the interplay between cognition, behavior, and sensory experience.