

# Tardive Dyskinesia (TD): Care Instructions



## Overview

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Tardive dyskinesia (TD) is a movement disorder. It's caused by using medicines called antipsychotics, often for a long time. Doctors use these medicines to treat mental health disorders such as schizophrenia.

Some people can take these medicines without getting TD. But for those people who do get it, the symptoms can cause distress.

TD causes a person to repeat the same movement over and over without being able to stop. If you have TD, you might have symptoms such as:

- Repeated chewing motions.
- Smacking your lips.
- Thrusting your tongue out of your mouth.
- Twitching your tongue.
- Quick and jerky movements (tics).

Treatment depends on how much you need the medicine that causes the symptoms. If symptoms are causing big problems for you, your doctor may have you lower the dose or stop the medicine. Or your doctor may switch you to a different medicine.

Other medicines sometimes can help relieve the TD symptoms. But you may still have symptoms, even if you stop taking the antipsychotic medicine.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

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- Be safe with medicines. Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine.
- Don't stop taking your medicine unless you and your doctor have discussed how this change might affect you. If you have trouble taking your medicine or feel that you don't need to take it, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may be able to change the medicine or the amount you take.
- Try not to isolate yourself if you are self-conscious about the uncontrolled motion. Tell your family and friends about TD and how it affects you.
- If you haven't done so yet, talk to your doctor about treatment for your TD symptoms.
- Ask your doctor, counselor, or other health professional for help finding a support group. Look for one that works for you. It can help to talk to others who have dealt with the same problems as you.

## When should you call for help?

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Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have new TD symptoms, or your symptoms get worse.
- You do not get better as expected.

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