Impact of Tourette syndrome on education

TAKE HOME MESSAGE:

Children with Tourette syndrome (TS) had a lower passing rate at lower secondary school and high school compared to healthy controls. This difference was more likely driven by severity of comorbidities than tic severity. Tic severity only influenced children with TS without comorbidity.

Our aim was to investigate the impact TS, TS severity and TS and comorbidities have on education.

Method: We included 314 with TS, 65 with TS+ADHD, 86 with TS+OCD, 34 with TS+ADHD+OCD and 128 controls. Ages ranged from 9 to 29 years. At baseline, the presence of tic and comorbidity were assessed. At follow-up, the severity of tic and comorbidity were assessed through structured interviews.

Results:

Cross-sectional

- Lower total motor tics score at follow-up was associated with having passed high school in TS group.
- Lower educational level across TS groups at age >16 years in TS+ADHD groups.
- No association between the severity of comorbidity and educational level.

Longitudinal

A high vocal tic score at the first examination was associated with not having passed lower secondary school at follow-up in the TS-only group.

Severe ADHD or severe OCD at first examination was associated with not having passed lower secondary school and high school at follow-up.