



AAN 74th ANNUAL MEETING ABSTRACT

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Abstract Title: Social media consumption in adolescents with tics

Press Release Title: Study: Tic Severity Linked with Social Media Use for Teens During Pandemic

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Objective: To explore the impact of social media behaviors in adolescents with tic disorders.

Background: Social media has an increasing role in disseminating information and driving perceptions of disease. During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media consumption greatly increased, particularly in adolescent populations. In parallel, there has been an increase in tic severity and explosive tic-like disorders.

Design/Methods: Adolescent patients with tics (ages 11-21) completed a 5-point Likert scale survey examining the value of various social media resources regarding their knowledge of tics. The survey also examined time spent on social media, tic frequency, tic severity, and quality of life (QOL) using a Patient Global Impressions of Change scale. Pearson correlation coefficient was used for statistical analysis.

Results: Of the survey participants (N=20), 65% reported using social media at least 4-5 times per day (5.6 hours on average per day) and 90% reported increased use of social media during COVID. Only 5% of participants reported using social media for information or interactions regarding tics. Although 85% of respondents indicated that tic frequency worsened during COVID and 50% of respondents indicated that social media adversely impacted their tics, there was no significant correlation between social media use and self-reported frequency of tics at the time of the survey ($R = -0.249$, $p = 0.289$) or since the onset of COVID ($R = -0.0055$, $p = 0.982$). However, there was a statistically significant correlation between tic severity, QOL, and social media use during COVID ($R = -0.496$, -0.447 , $p = 0.026$, 0.048 , respectively).

Conclusions: Social media use was frequent among surveyed adolescents with tics, and despite reports of limited tic-related social media use, we detected a significant correlation between tic severity and reduced QOL with increased social media use during COVID. We expect to enroll an additional 60 participants to further explore these associations.

Study Support: None