

Tardive dyskinesia (TD) is a neurological disorder characterized by involuntary and repetitive movements of the face, tongue, and other body parts. It is most commonly associated with long-term use of antipsychotic medications, but can also be caused by other medications that affect the dopamine system in the brain.

Symptoms of TD may include

- Twitching of the mouth
- Involuntary tongue movements
- Puckering of the lips
- Chewing movements
- Rapid blinking of the eyes

In some cases, the movements can be more severe and interfere with daily activities such as eating and speaking.

There is no cure for TD, but there are treatment options that can help manage the symptoms. One option is to slowly reduce or discontinue the medication that is causing the TD. This needs to be done under the supervision of a healthcare professional as abruptly stopping certain medications can cause withdrawal symptoms and relapse of the underlying condition for which the offending medication was started,

Other treatment options for TD include medications such as tetrabenazine, valbenazine, and deutetrabenazine, although the latter two are not yet available in the UK. These medications work by reducing the levels of dopamine in the brain and can help improve symptoms of TD. However, they can also cause side effects such as drowsiness, restlessness, and nausea.

Anticholinergic medications such as benztropine and trihexyphenidyl may also be used to treat TD. These medications work by blocking the effects of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter in the brain that can contribute to TD symptoms. However, they can also cause side effects such as dry mouth, constipation, and confusion.

In addition to medication, therapy such as cognitive behavioural therapy and biofeedback may also be helpful in managing the symptoms of TD. These therapies can help individuals learn coping mechanisms and relaxation techniques to reduce the severity and frequency of the involuntary movements.

Botulinum toxin can be used off-license to lessen the involuntary movements associated with TD.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of TD, it is important to speak with a healthcare provider. They can help determine the underlying cause of the symptoms and develop an individualized treatment plan to manage them. It is also important to attend regular appointments with the healthcare provider to monitor the symptoms and adjust the treatment plan as needed.