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### **Three in Every One Thousand U.S. Children Diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome**

The first-ever national estimate among a nationally representative sample of U.S. children revealed that 3 out of every 1000 children between the age of 6 and 17 in the United States have been diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome (TS), according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

The study, "Prevalence of Diagnosed Tourette Syndrome in Children in the United States, 2007," found that a TS diagnosis is three times more common in boys than in girls, and approximately twice as common in children between 12-17 years as those aged 6-12 years. Among children with TS, 27% were reported as having moderate or severe TS and 79% of children had also been diagnosed with at least one additional mental health or neurodevelopmental condition.

Tourette Syndrome is a neurological disorder that typically begins during early childhood, with symptoms being most severe between the ages of 10 and 12 years. TS is characterized by recurring multiple motor tics and at least one vocal tic. Tics are involuntary, repetitive, stereotyped, usually sudden and rapid movements or vocalizations that may be suppressed for short periods of time.

"TS and tic disorders have been linked to higher rates of [Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder](#), obsessive-compulsive disorder, and impairments associated with these conditions, such as learning disabilities and problems with peer relations," said Dr. Rebecca Bitsko, Health Scientist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Given the high number of children diagnosed with TS who have another mental health or neurodevelopmental condition, it is necessary to further study the relation between these conditions."

Further, the data showed that non-Hispanic white children were more than twice as likely as non-Hispanic black children or Hispanic children to have a parent-reported TS diagnosis.

"Having an estimate of the number of U.S. children who are diagnosed with TS is a first step toward understanding the overall impact of this condition in the population," said Dr. Bitsko. "Further research must examine differences in access to health care for children with TS in different population groups, the impact of TS on the quality of life, long term outcomes for children with TS, and strategies for reducing the impact of conditions associated with TS."

The study analyzed data from interviews with parents (or guardians) from 91,642 households from April 2007 through July 2008 collected through the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). The NSCH is the first large, national, population-based survey of U.S. children up to 18 years old that included questions on TS. This random-digit-dialed telephone survey is sponsored and directed by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau and conducted by CDC through the State and Local Area Integrated Telephone Survey program. Interviews were completed in 66.0% of identified households with children which represents a 46.7% response of all possible eligible households.

For more information about Tourette Syndrome and other birth defects please call toll free 1-800 CDC-INFO or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/tourette/default.htm>.