

Video Transcripts



What are Motor Stereotypies?

Motor Stereotypies are movements that a child does over and over, which they cannot control. There is not yet a clear scientific reason why these movements happen, but doctors are doing research to learn more about it.

Children with motor stereotypies may or may not realize that they are making the movements. However, children often like the feeling that the movements give them. There are many different types of movements, some are complex, such as wiggling one's finger's, flapping one's arms, and in some instances, jumping up and down.

What do I call it? | How do I say it?

It is important to call it 'what it is', so that other children don't confuse it with other medical problems and disorders – *mo-tore stair-ee-AH-tip-ee, mo-tore stair-ee-AH-tip-ees.*

What do I say when kids ask why I do that?

I'm just a normal kid, but I have a medical problem that I can't fully control. I'm in control of other parts of my body, but I can't control these movements and I can't control when they happen. They're really hard to stop. I have to do them again and again, usually when I get excited about something, like playing a game or watching a movie, or sometimes I do them when I'm tired.

Will I always have Motor Stereotypies?

Many children will continue to have movements. As you grow older the movements may lessen and you may gain more control. For example, children may learn to control their movements in school, but once they are in the comfort of their own home, the movements may reappear.

Is there medicine I can take to make it go away?

Right now there isn't any good medicine that your doctor can prescribe to help you control your movements. However, there is special behavioral therapy that you can practice to help you control the movements, which like playing a musical instrument – the more you practice, the better you get. There are two parts to this therapy: part one helps you recognize the movements, and part two involves practicing controlling the movements.

How does someone get Motor Stereotypies?

It is not known why children get Motor Stereotypies, but doctors think some children have it because it runs in their families, just like some children might get freckles or red hair. Doctors are doing research to learn more about how genes and other factors might be involved in causing Motor Stereotypies.

It is important to know that Motor Stereotypies are *not* caused by a germ and are *not* contagious, like other illnesses that children might get, such as the flu. You *can* play with other children, shake their hands, sit with them on the bus, and do all the other things that healthy children do.

Am I the only person in the world with Motor Stereotypies?

No! Lots of kids around the world have Motor Stereotypies – in all of the towns and countries you can name – from A to Z! While it is common, many people don't know anything about it, so they may stare at children, like you, which may make you feel different. But it is okay, let them stare.

Is it okay if I like to do my movements?

Yes, it is OK. The movements may be hard for other children to understand but it's okay for you to do them. If you are uncomfortable with your movements, or they disrupt your classroom, your parents can talk to your teacher and classmates about Motor Stereotypies.

Should my teachers and school know that I have Motor Stereotypies?

Many children aren't sure what to tell their friends and teachers. Sometimes it is a good idea for you and your parents to discuss your Motor Stereotypies with your classmates, teachers, and staff at school. They should be aware of any special needs you might have. For example, you can tell your teacher that your movements sometimes might interfere with your ability to "focus" on classroom activities. It is important to know that a good first step toward having your teachers and school understand your Motor Stereotypies is to talk to them.

What if I'm Bullied?

If bullying happens at school, you should tell your teacher, and your parents *immediately*. If bullying happens outside of school, also seek help from your parents *right away*.

Because I have Motor Stereotypies - Will I not be smart when I grow up?

No – dream big! You might feel different because of your movements, but that doesn't mean you aren't smart. You are just like other healthy kids that grow up to do great things.
