

Tics are common in famous boys choir

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'Tis the season for choirs to raise their voices in holiday song. A new *Annals of Neurology* study shows that there is a high frequency of tics in an extremely highly achieving group of pre-pubertal singers. 35% of 40 young singers in the Boys Choir exhibited tics during a public concert of Bach's Christmas Oratorio.

The findings illustrate that there may be a relation between ticcing and professionally engaging in music. The sole perception of tics as a disorder may therefore fall short, particularly in the context of the developing (and performing) brain.

"Tics are common in children, and there is some evidence that a surplus of movements, particularly tics, might facilitate some aspects of motor learning. If so, then such extra movements are not necessarily a sign of disease but might in fact be more closely related to normal development," said senior author Dr. Alexander Münchau, of the University of Lübeck, in Germany.

"The observation of the high prevalence of tics in highly achieving young singers might indicate that a surplus of movements might in some ways be related to superior performance. We hope that our observation will contribute to de-stigmatizing [tics](#) in children and fostering research interest in the meaning of extra movements in children during motor development."

More information: Sinem Tunc et al, Boys in a famous choir: Singing and ticcing, *Annals of Neurology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1002/ana.25112](https://doi.org/10.1002/ana.25112)

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