

7 MYTHS ABOUT ESSENTIAL TREMOR

1: OF ALL TREMOR TYPES, ESSENTIAL TREMOR (ET) IS THE LEAST COMMON—



FALSE. ET is in fact the most common cause of tremor in patients and is often misdiagnosed as Parkinson's Disease. Statistics from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (USA) have found that those diagnosed with tremor are 8 times more likely to have ET than Parkinson's.

2: THOSE DIAGNOSED WITH ET WILL ONLY EXPERIENCE SHAKY HANDS—



NOT NECESSARILY. Those with ET often also will experience shaking in their voice, head area, chest and legs. Some patients also report experiencing uncomfortable sensations of internal tremor within their bodies.

3: ET SOLELY STRIKES THE OLD, AGED OR FRAIL—



FALSE. Anyone at any age can develop or be diagnosed with the condition – even new-born babies have been diagnosed with ET.

4: IF NO ONE IN MY FAMILY HAS ET, I WON'T DEVELOP IT—



INACCURATE. While there is a 50% chance that parents with ET will pass the gene to their children, it's also not uncommon for people to be diagnosed with the condition, even without it running in their family.

5: THOSE WITH ET CAN 'POP PILLS' AND FEEL BETTER IMMEDIATELY—



NOT NECESSARILY. There aren't many prescription medications available for treating ET. Moreover, for drugs with proven efficacy, only 60% of people who take these medications experience improvements.

6: THE TREMORS THEMSELVES ARE THE WORST THING ABOUT ET—



UNTRUE. As the condition gradually impinges upon their independence and quality of life, those with ET often feel frustrated or embarrassed. Daily activities (e.g. feeding themselves, writing etc.) are harder to accomplish – sometimes even physically impossible. Over time, they may feel too shy to interact with others outside of their comfort zone, which can lead to other conditions like depression.

7: A SIMPLE MEDICAL TEST WILL EASILY DIAGNOSE ET IN PATIENTS—



FALSE. At present, there is no quick medical test for ET. If one suspects that they/someone they know has ET, they must see a doctor who specialises in movement disorder. A neurological examination will be conducted by the doctor to evaluate a person's symptoms. Similarly, children with suspected ET should see a paediatric movement disorder specialist.

<http://www.essentialtremor.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/FactSheet012013.pdf>

SOURCES:

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/>