IMPORTANCE  Tourette syndrome (TS) is characterized by high rates of psychiatric comorbidity; however, few studies have fully characterized these comorbidities. Furthermore, most studies have included relatively few participants (<200), and none has examined the ages of highest risk for each TS-associated comorbidity or their etiologic relationship to TS.

OBJECTIVE  To characterize the lifetime prevalence, clinical associations, ages of highest risk, and etiology of psychiatric comorbidity among individuals with TS.

DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS  Cross-sectional structured diagnostic interviews conducted between April 1, 1992, and December 31, 2008, of participants with TS (n = 1374) and TS-unaffected family members (n = 1142).

MAIN OUTCOMES AND MEASURES  Lifetime prevalence of comorbid DSM-IV-TR disorders, their heritabilities, ages of maximal risk, and associations with symptom severity, age at onset, and parental psychiatric history.

RESULTS  The lifetime prevalence of any psychiatric comorbidity among individuals with TS was 85.7%; 57.7% of the population had 2 or more psychiatric disorders. The mean (SD) number of lifetime comorbid diagnoses was 2.1 (1.6); the mean number was 0.9 (1.3) when obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) were excluded, and 72.1% of the individuals met the criteria for OCD or ADHD. Other disorders, including mood, anxiety, and disruptive behavior, each occurred in approximately 30% of the participants. The age of greatest risk for the onset of most comorbid psychiatric disorders was between 4 and 10 years, with the exception of eating and substance use disorders, which began in adolescence (interquartile range, 15-19 years for both). Tourette syndrome was associated with increased risk of anxiety (odds ratio [OR], 1.4; 95% CI, 1.0-1.9; P = .04) and decreased risk of substance use disorders (OR, 0.6; 95% CI, 0.3-0.9; P = .02) independent from comorbid OCD and ADHD; however, high rates of mood disorders among participants with TS (29.8%) may be accounted for by comorbid OCD (OR, 3.7; 95% CI, 2.9-4.8; P < .001). Parental history of ADHD was associated with a higher burden of non-OCD, non-ADHD comorbid psychiatric disorders (OR, 1.86; 95% CI, 1.32-2.61; P < .001). Genetic correlations between TS and mood (RhoG, 0.47), anxiety (RhoG, 0.35), and disruptive behavior disorders (RhoG, 0.48), may be accounted for by ADHD and, for mood disorders, by OCD.

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE  This study is, to our knowledge, the most comprehensive of its kind. It confirms the belief that psychiatric comorbidities are common among individuals with TS, demonstrates that most comorbidities begin early in life, and indicates that certain comorbidities may be mediated by the presence of comorbid OCD or ADHD. In addition, genetic analyses suggest that some comorbidities may be more biologically related to OCD and/or ADHD rather than to TS.
Tourette syndrome (TS) is a childhood-onset neuropsychiatric disorder characterized by multiple motor tics and 1 or more vocal tics that persist for at least 1 year.1-2 Multiple comorbid psychiatric disorders have been reported in TS-affected individuals; when present, these conditions typically cause more distress and impairment than do tics.3-7 High rates of comorbid attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) have been well documented and are thought to be core components of the TS phenotype.4,8-11 Although elevated rates for mood disorders, nonobsessional anxiety disorders, and disruptive behavior disorders (DBDs) have also been reported,4,12-17 a significant gap in knowledge still exists regarding the range, prevalence, and clinical attributes of the non-OCD, non-ADHD comorbid disorders. The few available studies were limited by small sample sizes (<200 participants),3,7,18-20 small number of diagnoses examined, or reliance on symptom checklists and severity scales rather than DSM-based, structured diagnostic psychiatric assessments.18,21-24 Despite methodologic limitations, these studies12,13,15 suggest that a high proportion of individuals with TS (61%-96%) have at least 1 comorbid psychiatric disorder. Unfortunately, there is no consensus regarding expected rates of the noncore (ie, non-OCD, non-ADHD) psychiatric disorders in TS-affected individuals; in addition, there is limited knowledge regarding typical age at onset, ages of highest risk, and association with impairment for these disorders.

Although the shared genetic susceptibility to OCD and ADHD in TS-affected families has been established,25-27 the etiologic relationships between TS and other psychiatric disorders have not been examined. Elevated rates of psychiatric comorbidity may arise from (1) shared genetic susceptibility with TS, (2) shared genetic susceptibility with comorbid OCD or ADHD, or (3) nongenetic factors (eg, shared environment). Together with quantifying the extent of comorbidit...
Comorbid Psychiatric Disorders in Tourette Syndrome

Demographic Characteristics

The sample consisted of 1374 TS-affected individuals, including parents or siblings without a TS diagnosis who met the best estimate criteria for TS (583 [42.4%]), and 1142 TS-unaffected first-degree relatives. The subsample of TS-affected individuals showed a 3:1 male predominance (1006 [73.2%] male), and the mean (SD) age at assessment was 19.1 (13.5) years. Demographics and clinical characteristics of TS-affected and TS-unaffected participants are presented in eTable 1 in the Supplement.

Overall Burden of Psychiatric Comorbidity

Of the participants with TS, 85.7% met the criteria for 1 or more comorbid disorder (including OCD and ADHD) and 57.2% met the criteria for 2 or more comorbid disorders. Lifetime prevalence rates for classes of comorbid disorders are summarized in Table 1; rates of individual disorders by sex and age are presented in eTable 2 and eTable 3, respectively, in the Supplement. The mean (SD) number of lifetime disorders was 2.1 (1.6). When OCD and ADHD were excluded, 45.3% of the patients met the criteria for 1 or more comorbid disorder and 23.6% met the criteria for 2 or more comorbid disorders. The mean number of lifetime diagnoses, excluding OCD and ADHD, was 0.9 (1.3). There were no significant differences in the rates of comorbid diagnoses between probands and TS-affected relatives when controlling for age at assessment (eTable 4 in the Supplement); therefore, subsequent analyses combined these groups.

Prevalence of Specific Psychiatric Disorders

OCD and ADHD

The most common comorbid psychiatric disorders were OCD (50.0%) and ADHD (54.3%); 72.1% of the TS-affected participants met the criteria for either disorder. Females were more likely to have comorbid OCD (57.1% vs 47.5%; P < .01), and males were more likely to have comorbid ADHD (58.5% vs 42.3%; P < .01). Nearly one-third (29.5%) of the participants had TS+OCD+ADHD, 22.4% had TS+OCD, and 20.2% had TS+ADHD, and

Table 1. Lifetime Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comorbid Disorder</th>
<th>All TS-Affected Participants</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>P Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No./Total No. With Available Data (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive spectrum†</td>
<td>904/1368 (66.1)</td>
<td>645/1001 (64.4)</td>
<td>259/367 (70.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention-deficit/hyperactivity</td>
<td>713/1314 (54.3)</td>
<td>564/962 (58.6)</td>
<td>149/352 (42.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood‡</td>
<td>277/930 (29.8)</td>
<td>184/690 (26.7)</td>
<td>93/240 (38.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety§</td>
<td>343/949 (36.1)</td>
<td>225/703 (32.0)</td>
<td>118/246 (48.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive behavior*</td>
<td>185/622 (29.7)</td>
<td>157/493 (31.8)</td>
<td>28/129 (21.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating†</td>
<td>19/937 (2.0)</td>
<td>2/693 (0.3)</td>
<td>17/244 (7.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotic§</td>
<td>7/931 (0.8)</td>
<td>5/689 (0.7)</td>
<td>2/242 (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance useh</td>
<td>59/948 (6.2)</td>
<td>42/701 (6.0)</td>
<td>17/247 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminationi</td>
<td>108/668 (16.2)</td>
<td>90/531 (17.0)</td>
<td>18/137 (13.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviation: TS, Tourette syndrome. *The χ² or Fisher exact test was used to compare rates of each disorder in males vs females. †Obsessive-compulsive disorder and subclinical obsessive-compulsive disorder. ‡ Major depressive disorder, dysthymia, and bipolar disorder I and II. § Major generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia without panic, posttraumatic stress disorder, separation anxiety disorder, social phobia, and specific phobia. hAlcohol and other substance use or dependence, excluding tobacco use. i Enuresis and encopresis.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

The sample consisted of 1374 TS-affected individuals, including parents or siblings without a TS diagnosis who met the best estimate criteria for TS (583 [42.4%]), and 1142 TS-unaffected first-degree relatives. The subsample of TS-affected individuals showed a 3:1 male predominance (1006 [73.2%] male), and the mean (SD) age at assessment was 19.1 (13.5) years. Demographics and clinical characteristics of TS-affected and TS-unaffected participants are presented in eTable 1 in the Supplement.
27.9% had TS only. There was a significant interaction of sex and age with diagnostic group ($\chi^2 = 43.1, P < .001$; and $\chi^2 = 121.6, P < .001$, respectively).

Other Conditions
After OCD and ADHD, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and DBDs were the most prevalent classes of psychiatric comorbidity, each affecting approximately 30% of TS-affected participants; psychotic disorders were the least common (<1%). The prevalence of individual disorders ranged from 0.5% (bipolar II disorder) to 26.1% (major depressive disorder) (eTables 2-5 in the Supplement). Females were more likely to have major depressive disorder, most anxiety disorders, and eating disorders. Males were more likely to have ADHD and DBD (oppositional defiant disorder or conduct disorder) (Table 1 and eTable 2 in the Supplement). Adults and adolescents were most likely to have OCD as well as mood, anxiety, eating, and substance use disorders, whereas children were more likely to have ADHD (eTable 3 in the Supplement).

There was a clear relationship between OCD, ADHD, and the other psychiatric comorbidities in TS-affected participants. Mood, anxiety, and substance use disorders were more prevalent among participants with TS+OCD and TS+OCD+ADHD than among those with TS-only or TS+ADHD. Disruptive behavior disorders and psychotic disorders were more prevalent among participants with TS+OCD+ADHD than among the other 3 groups (Figure 1 and eTable 5 in the Supplement). When these analyses were repeated for males and females separately using the diagnostic groups shown in Figure 1, patterns of significance for $\chi^2$ analyses were comparable to those for all TS-affected participants combined, except for psychotic disorders, which is attributable to small sample sizes (eTable 5 in the Supplement).

To assess the relationships between TS, OCD, ADHD, and psychiatric comorbidity, we conducted a multivariate generalized estimating equation model in all individuals (eTable 6 in the Supplement). After controlling for OCD and ADHD, TS was independently associated with an increased risk of anxiety disorders (odds ratio [OR], 1.4; 95% CI, 1.0-1.9; $P = .04$) and a decreased risk of substance use disorder (OR, 0.6; 95% CI, 0.3-0.9; $P = .02$); there was no significant independent association between TS and mood disorder or DBD. Obsessive-compulsive disorder was independently associated with a 2-fold or greater risk of mood disorders (OR, 3.8; 95% CI, 2.9-4.9; $P < .001$), anxiety disorders (OR, 2.8; 95% CI, 2.2-3.6; $P < .001$), DBDs (OR, 2.0; 95% CI, 1.4-2.9; $P < .001$), and substance use disorders (OR, 3.9; 95% CI, 2.5-6.0; $P < .001$). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder was independently associated with an increased risk of anxiety disorders (OR, 1.5; 95% CI, 1.2-2.0; $P < .01$) and DBDs (OR, 4.0; 95% CI, 2.6-6.2; $P < .001$) but not substance use or mood disorders. There were no significant associations between TS, OCD, ADHD, and elimination or eating disorders. The results of these models build on those summarized in Figure 1 because they control for the age and sex of the participants.

Age of Highest Risk
The median age at onset for TS was 6 years (interquartile range, 4-8 years) (Figure 2 and eTable 7 in the Supplement). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and DBD had the youngest median age at onset and earliest ages of highest risk (5 years: interquartile ranges, 3-6 and 3-8, respectively). The high-risk period began at age 4 years for anxiety disorders, 7 years for mood disorders, and 13 years for substance use and eating disorders. Compared with males, females tended to have later ages at onset of TS, DBDs, anxiety disorders, and mood disorders (eTable 7 in the Supplement).

Clinical Correlates of Number of Psychiatric Disorders
High tic and moderate/high OCD symptom severity, lifetime prevalence of ADHD or OCD, and parental history of TS/CMVTD and ADHD were associated with having 1 or more noncore psychiatric comorbidity in univariate analyses (Table 2). In the multivariate model, only high tic severity (OR, 1.57; 95% CI, 1.11-2.21; $P = .01$), ADHD (OR, 1.51; 95% CI, 1.12-2.03; $P < .01$), OCD (OR, 1.77; 95% CI, 1.34-2.35; $P < .001$), and parental hist-
History of ADHD (OR, 1.55; 95% CI, 1.08-2.23; \( P = .02 \)) remained significant. Obsessive-compulsive disorder severity was omitted from the multivariate model to avoid confounding with OCD diagnosis.

Genetic Relationships With TS
Consistent with previous findings,26,35 including those from a subset of the current sample, TS/CMVTD, OCD, and ADHD all demonstrated significant genetic correlations (eTable 8 in the Supplement). In addition, TS/CMVTD had significant genetic correlations with mood disorders (RhoG [SE], 0.47 [0.17]; \( P = .004 \)), anxiety disorders (RhoG [SE], 0.35 [0.15]; \( P = .02 \)), and DBDs (RhoG [SE], 0.40 [0.18]; \( P = .02 \)); these correlations were not significant when controlling for OCD and ADHD (eTable 9 in the Supplement). Mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and DBDs were also genetically correlated with ADHD; these correlations remained significant after controlling for TS/CMVTD and OCD (Table 3). Furthermore, mood disorders were significantly genetically correlated with OCD, even when controlling for TS/CMVTD and ADHD (Table 3).

Discussion
To our knowledge, this study represents the most comprehensive examination to date of the extent and burden of comorbid psychiatric disorders in TS and is the first to report the ages of highest risk and etiologic relationships with TS for a wide variety of psychiatric conditions. Our results have implications both clinically and for ongoing research into the causes and etiologic relationships between these psychiatric disorders.

Clinical Relevance
Consistent with previous studies,3,4,12,15,36-39 we identified a very high burden of psychiatric disorders. Our results suggest that the vast majority of children with TS can be expected to develop 1 or more comorbid psychiatric disorder during their lifetime, and more than half will develop 2 disorders. In addition to high rates of OCD (50.0%) and ADHD (54.3%), we identified high rates of mood disorders (29.8%), anxiety disorders (36.1%), DBDs (29.7%), and elimination disorders (25.2%).

Table 2. Clinical Predictors of Having 1 or More Comorbid Disorder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic (Reference Value)</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>OR (95% CI)</th>
<th>( P ) Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symptom severity(^a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tic severity tertile (0-16)</td>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>1.18 (0.90-1.55)</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-30</td>
<td>1.87 (1.43-2.46) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCD severity tertile (0-2)</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>1.64 (1.26-2.13) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>2.86 (2.13-3.82) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comorbid condition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD (no ADHD)</td>
<td>ADHD present</td>
<td>1.93 (1.53-2.43) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCD (no OCD)</td>
<td>OCD present</td>
<td>2.17 (1.75-2.70) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental history(^d)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS/CMVTD (parental TS/CMVTD absent)</td>
<td>Parental TS/CMVTD present</td>
<td>1.33 (1.01-1.76) ( ^c )</td>
<td>.04 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCD (parental OCD absent)</td>
<td>Parental OCD present</td>
<td>1.11 (0.84-1.47)</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD (parental ADHD absent)</td>
<td>Parental ADHD present</td>
<td>1.86 (1.32-2.61) ( ^c )</td>
<td>&lt;.001 ( ^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at onset, y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS (≥7)</td>
<td>&lt;7</td>
<td>1.02 (0.82-1.29)</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCD (≥8)</td>
<td>&lt;8</td>
<td>1.10 (0.74-1.64)</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD (≥5)</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
<td>1.35 (0.90-2.01)</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations: ADHD, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder; CMVTD, chronic motor or vocal tic disorder; OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder; OR, odds ratio; TS, Tourette syndrome.

\(^a\) Separate generalized estimating equations, clustering on family and controlling for age at interview and sex, were modeled with the presence of 1 or more comorbid disorder other than ADHD or OCD as the outcome and each clinical characteristic as the predictor variable.

\(^b\) Symptom severity scales for tics and obsessive-compulsive symptoms are described in the eMethods in the Supplement.

\(^c\) Statistically significant.

\(^d\) Parental history was available only for probands and their full siblings.

Data points and bars represent median ages at onset and interquartile ranges, respectively. The width of each plot is proportional to the number of individuals with the given age at TS onset. ADHD indicates attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder; OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder.
Anxiety disorders (16.2%). We found relatively low rates of psychotic disorders and substance abuse disorders at the time of evaluation, although we do not have longitudinal data for the younger individuals as they age, when such disorders typically manifest.

To our knowledge, this study is the first to report the ages of highest risk for comorbid psychiatric disorders as well as the relationship of demographic and clinical characteristics with overall disorder burden in TS. For most disorders, the age of greatest risk began before 5 years, with high risk for anxiety and DBD continuing into adolescence and risk for depressive disorders continuing into young adulthood. Previous research has demonstrated that TS symptoms typically emerge between the ages of 5 and 7 years. ADHD generally appears 2 to 3 years earlier and OCD 5 to 6 years later. In this study, DBD and ADHD began at or before age 5 years, prior to tic onset. In contrast to the findings of population-based epidemiologic studies, OCD and anxiety disorders also began early in the patients in our study, typically within 1 year of the onset of tics (with many cases beginning earlier); mood disorders had a more distributed age-at-onset pattern, beginning as early as age 5 years and becoming more frequent at approximately 7 to 8 years. These results, in combination with the high likelihood of developing a mood disorder, anxiety disorder, or DBD, suggest that psychiatric assessments of TS-affected children should begin early and continue throughout adolescence and adulthood.

Our results also suggest that TS-affected children who have concomitant OCD or a parent with ADHD should be carefully evaluated over time for the development of mood disorder, anxiety disorder, and DBD. In addition, adolescents, particularly those with OCD and/or ADHD, should be monitored for the development of a substance use disorder. In a similar manner, TS-affected children with ADHD should be evaluated for other DBD and anxiety disorders. The association between high tic severity and the number of non-ADHD/non-OCD comorbidities is consistent with a previous study demonstrating an association between tic severity and non-OCD anxiety disorders.

**Etiologic Relevance**
The heritability estimates we observed confirm previous research showing that TS, OCD, and ADHD are highly genetically related. However, for what we believe to be the first time, we also provide evidence of a strong genetic relationship between these TS-related phenotypes and mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and DBDs. Of particular interest, our analyses suggest that the observed genetic correlations between TS and these disorders are better accounted for by an underlying genetic relationship with ADHD and, in the case of mood disorders, by an underlying genetic relationship with both ADHD and OCD. In non-TS samples, there is considerable evidence to support shared genetic variance between ADHD and DBD and some data to support a shared genetic diathesis underlying ADHD and major depressive disorder. Genetic relationships between OCD and mood disorders have not previously been examined. Our findings are in line with those of a previous study that found no increased rates of ADHD or other non-OCD disorders, such as anxiety, affective, substance abuse, and psychotic disorders, among parents of probands with TS compared with controls, suggesting that these disorders segregate independently from TS. Our findings that parental history of ADHD predicts psychiatric disorder burden in TS-affected
offspring, independent of parental history of TS and OCD, provides additional support for the observed genetic relationships between psychiatric disorders and ADHD.

Limitations
This study has several limitations. First, our data are cross-sectional; thus, we could not assess causation (eg, whether clinical characteristics predicted subsequent disorder onset). Second, the predominately clinic-based recruitment may have biased our sample to participants with more severe, comorbid, or familial TS, limiting generalizability. This concern is somewhat mitigated by the presence of parents and siblings with previously undiagnosed TS, who were typically less severely affected. Third, although consistent with previous studies, the total psychiatric burden identified in the present study is likely an underestimate given that some disorders were not assessed (eg, pervasive developmental disorders) and not everyone had passed the age of risk for all disorders. Specifically, parents were not routinely assessed for certain childhood disorders (eg, elimination disorders) and children were not assessed for schizophrenia, although they were evaluated for psychosis. In addition, the lifetime rates of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and substance use disorders could be attenuated by an ascertainment bias (ie, the children and adolescents in our sample may have developed these adult-onset disorders later in life). Fourth, ADHD severity was not uniformly assessed. Fifth, we did not have reliable data regarding the recruitment methods (ie, Tourette Syndrome Association vs specialty clinics), and the characteristics of participants may vary by recruitment method. Sixth, pervasive developmental disorders were not systematically assessed or uniformly excluded; future studies should examine patterns of comorbidity between TS and pervasive developmental disorders. Finally, because the parent genetic study focused on sibling pairs and parent-child trios, the heritabilities may be underestimated because the algorithm used by SOLAR is best suited to analysis of multigenerational families.

Conclusions
This study provides important new data regarding the prevalence, predictors, and ages of the highest risk for psychiatric illness among individuals affected with TS, as well as what we believe to be the first formal evaluation of the etiologic relationships between disorders other than OCD and ADHD. The key clinical findings, that mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and DBDs are very common among TS-affected individuals, tend to begin early in life, and are highly associated with comorbid OCD and ADHD, are of direct and immediate relevance to practitioners. The genetic analyses advance our understanding of the etiologic relationships between TS and other psychiatric disorders and provide a framework for future studies aimed at better understanding these complex, interrelated syndromes.
Comorbid Psychiatric Disorders in Tourette Syndrome

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REFERENCES


