



International Essential Tremor Foundation

Your Voice for Essential Tremor



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Let's Talk About Essential Tremor

March is National Essential Tremor Awareness Month

Shaky hands are not a sign of aging. And a shaky head is not a sure sign of Parkinson's disease. An involuntary shaking of the hands, head, voice, legs or trunk can be a sign of essential tremor (ET).

ET is one of the most common movement disorders in the world, and the most common cause of tremor. It impacts an estimated 10 million people in the U.S. alone. Though not life threatening, it can be life-debilitating. Because it is an action tremor, it occurs when trying to perform daily activities such as eating, drinking, writing, typing, shaving, etc. The severity of the tremor can vary based on the activity being performed, and often worsens with stress and fatigue.

March is National Essential Tremor Awareness Month (NETA), a time to educate the public about this common condition, and rally support for those impacted by it. This year marks the 10th anniversary of NETA Month. In December 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives passed resolution 1264 declaring this special recognition month. Each year since that time, the International Essential Tremor Foundation (IETF) has coordinated a special awareness campaign during March.

"March is an important time for all those affected by ET," said Patrick McCartney, executive director of the IETF. "We truly believe that where there is awareness, there is hope. The designation of March as National Essential Tremor Awareness Month provides our organization with another platform to educate the public about the condition, as well as raise much needed funds to find better treatments and a cure."

This year's NETA Month theme is "Let's Talk About ET." Here are some facts to get the conversation started:

- ET is often misdiagnosed as Parkinson's disease, yet it's eight times more common.
- The median age for the onset of ET is 45, but it can affect anyone at any age – even infants.

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- ET is often associated with a strong family history, but no specific ET-related gene has been identified.
- Researchers estimate 4 to 5 percent of people ages 40 to 60 have ET. The incidence rate for people age 60 and older is estimated to be between 6.3 and 9 percent.
- Many people with ET are too embarrassed to go out in public and remain isolated in their homes, which can lead to depression.
- There is no cure for ET, but there are medications that can calm the tremor for some people. For advanced cases, there are surgical treatments.

The IETF is offering free awareness posters during March. These posters define ET and list some facts. Order yours at <https://essentialtremor.org/what-we-do/et-awareness/essential-tremor-awareness-posters-order-form/>.

“Let’s Talk About ET” water bottles and tote bags are being offered during March for those who make a donation to support the IETF’s mission. <https://essentialtremor.org/what-we-do/et-awareness/>.

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About The International Essential Tremor Foundation:

Founded in 1988, the International Essential Tremor Foundation (IETF) is the leading organization in the world dedicated to people affected by essential tremor (ET). Its mission is to provide hope to the ET community worldwide through awareness, education, support and research.

To date, the IETF has awarded \$900,000 in research grants to fund numerous promising studies in the search for the cause of ET. Each year, it hosts numerous community awareness events across the U.S. to provide those affected with the basic knowledge necessary to become their own advocate when seeking treatment. The IETF also provides assistance to a vast network of support groups around the world. To learn more about essential tremor and the IETF, visit www.essentialtremor.org.