

# 1 Temporal discounting in adolescents and adults with Tourette 2 syndrome

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## 21 22 23 **Word count**

24 3935

## 25 26 **Short Title**

27 Temporal discounting in adolescents and adults with TS

## 28 **Key Words**

29 Temporal discounting, Gilles de la Tourette syndrome, impulsivity, self-control, development

## 30 **Funding sources**

31 C.S. and T.S. were funded by the Walter and Marga Boll Foundation. J.P. was supported by Deutsche  
32 Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG: PE 1627/5-1 and PE 1627/5-2). A.M. was supported by the DFG (FOR  
33 2698).

## 34 **Financial Disclosures**

35 The authors reported no biomedical financial interests or potential conflicts of interests.

36

## 37 **Abstract**

### 38 **Background:**

39 Tourette syndrome is a neurodevelopmental disorder with the clinical hallmarks of motor and phonic  
40 tics which are associated with hyperactivity in dopaminergic networks. Dopaminergic hyperactivity in  
41 the basal ganglia has previously been linked to increased sensitivity to positive reinforcement and  
42 increases in choice impulsivity.

### 43 **Objective:**

44 We address whether this extends to changes in temporal discounting, where impulsivity is  
45 operationalized as an increased preference to choose smaller-but-sooner over larger-but-later rewards.  
46 Results are discussed with respect to neural models of temporal discounting, dopaminergic alterations  
47 in Tourette syndrome and the developmental trajectory of temporal discounting.

### 48 **Methods:**

49 In the first study we included nineteen adolescent patients with Tourette syndrome and nineteen age-  
50 and education matched controls. In the second study, we compared twenty-five adult patients with  
51 Tourette syndrome and twenty-five age- and education-matched controls.

### 52 **Results:**

53 In the light of the dopaminergic hyperactivity model, we predicted differences in temporal discounting  
54 in patients with Tourette syndrome. However, computational modeling of choice behavior using  
55 hierarchical Bayesian parameter estimation revealed reduced impulsive choice in adolescent patients,  
56 and no group differences in adults.

### 57 **Conclusion:**

58 We speculate that adolescents might show reduced discounting due to improved inhibitory functions  
59 that also affect choice impulsivity and/or the developmental trajectory of executive control functions.  
60 The absence of an effect in adults might be due to differences in the clinical population (e.g. patients  
61 who acquired successful tic inhibition during adolescence might have gone into remission). Future  
62 studies would benefit from adopting longitudinal approaches to further elucidate the developmental  
63 trajectory of these effects.

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## 68 **1. Introduction**

69 Tourette syndrome (TS) is a childhood onset neuropsychiatric disorder characterized by motor and  
70 phonic tics that wax and wane in their severity with an estimated prevalence of around 1 % (1). Motor  
71 tics are repetitive, sudden movements such as eye blinking or facial muscle contractions and phonic tics  
72 are repetitive sounds such as throat clearing or verbal utterances (1,2). TS onset occurs predominantly  
73 in early childhood with a peak of symptom severity between the age of 10 and 12 years. Thereafter, tics  
74 improve in around 80 % of children until the end of adolescence (3,4). TS is associated with high  
75 comorbidity rates, predominantly attention-deficit/hyperactive disorder (ADHD), obsessive-compulsive  
76 disorder (OCD), depression (5) and impulse control disorders such as self-injurious behavior (6). Studies  
77 estimate that only 8 to 37 % of patients with TS do not exhibit any comorbidity (1,5,7). Treatment  
78 possibilities include cognitive behavioral therapy (i.e. habit reversal training) (8), antidopaminergic  
79 drugs (9) and new experimental approaches including cannabinoids (10) and deep brain stimulation  
80 (11,12).

81 Both clinical and neuroscientific research have highlighted possible developmental dysfunctions in the  
82 cortico-striatal-thalamo-cortical loops (13–15) especially with respect to dopamine (DA) that strongly  
83 modulates these circuits (16,17). The striatum, a main gateway in these loops (18) plays a key role in  
84 selectively amplifying converging sensory input to enable situation specific behavioral adaptations such  
85 as the adequate control of voluntarily movement (16). Predictions (i.e. expectations) of reward as well  
86 as the gating of specific motor responses are under dopaminergic modulation. Theories about the  
87 developmental underpinnings of TS in terms of DA function range from theoretical assumptions about  
88 a supersensitivity of striatal DA receptors (19) over tonic-phasic or presynaptic DA dysfunction (20–  
89 22) to DA hyperinnervation (20,23). Whereas the latter (i.e. excessive innervation of the basal ganglia  
90 via dendrites of midbrain DA neurons) may account for a range of empirical observations, including  
91 those, that led to the establishment of earlier hypotheses mentioned above (see 24).

92 To date several studies have investigated motor impulsivity in patients with TS with reference to DA's  
93 role in reward and motor control (25,26). However, fewer studies have explored alterations in value-  
94 based decision-making in TS. However, this question is of particular interest because motor and choice  
95 impulsivity might at least in part be supported by common neural systems. First, DA in fronto-striatal  
96 circuits plays a role in both motor control (27,28) and choice impulsivity (29–33). Second, some studies  
97 have suggested that lateral prefrontal cortex regions might support impulse control functions, both in  
98 motor and non-motor domains (34–39). Two studies (40,41) examined impairments in value-based  
99 decision-making in TS in the context of reinforcement learning tasks. Palminteri and Pessiglione (2018)  
100 observed impaired learning from negative feedback in TS, which is consistent with the idea of a  
101 hyperdopaminergic state. Kéri and colleagues observed impaired probabilistic classification learning,  
102 especially in children with severe tics (41). However, whether choice impulsivity is impaired in TS  
103 remains an open question.

104 One way to reliably assess reward impulsivity (choice impulsivity) is via temporal discounting tasks  
105 (42–46). Temporal discounting describes a general preference for smaller sooner (SS) over larger, but  
106 later rewards (LL) (47). A relative preference for SS rewards (steep discounting of value over time) is  
107 associated with a range of problematic behaviors including substance use disorders and  
108 overweight/obesity (48) but also the tendency to procrastinate to invest for retirement (49) or to  
109 procrastinate to save up for future investments (50). The rate of temporal discounting is under complex  
110 modulation by individual and contextual variables (51–53), whereas striatal DA networks and prefrontal  
111 top down modulation seem to be the key regions of interest. However, the precise relationship between  
112 dopaminergic states and impulsive choice is complex. On the one hand, pharmacological reduction in  
113 DA levels decreases discounting (31–33,54). On the other hand, hyperdopaminergic states e.g. due to  
114 administration of the dopamine precursor L-DOPA, are also sometimes associated with increased  
115 discounting (29). Likewise, patients with Parkinson’s disease can exhibit increased impulsive behavior  
116 following DA replacement therapy (30). To sum up, DA modulation likely contributes to the modulation  
117 of intertemporal choice via its action on different fronto-striatal loops, but there is little evidence for a  
118 clear and simple linear relationship between DA levels and choice impulsivity.

119 In terms of top-down inhibitory mechanisms the picture is somehow relatively clear. The LPFC is  
120 assumed to modify choice impulsivity (55–58). That is, inhibition of the selection of tempting SS  
121 choices in this model depends on prefrontal inhibitory regulation of subcortical or ventromedial  
122 prefrontal value representations. Changes in structural and functional connectivity within this network  
123 are linked to the development of self-control (in this study the term self-control generally refers to far  
124 sighted behavior in value based decision making) from adolescence to early adulthood (59–61).  
125 Inhibition and top-down control likewise plays a central role in motor impulsivity and so is believed to  
126 modulate TS pathophysiology, e.g. in the context of suppressing urges and tics (25).

127 Studies did show that motor and cognitive impulsive actions might require different forms of the  
128 construct of self-control and can be differentiated (62). Even though it seems to play an important role  
129 in TS pathophysiology, evidence on the ability to successfully inhibit motor output in patients with TS  
130 is mixed and evidence is not entirely convincing that adolescents and adults show a general deficit in  
131 inhibitory control (25,26,63–67). However, there is extensive evidence for regional overlap between  
132 inhibitory mechanisms in terms of motor, choice impulsivity and even other forms like emotion  
133 regulation (35–38,68,69). Training in one domain might possibly affect performance other domains  
134 (70). Regarding choice and motor impulsivity the dorsal striatum might be a key region of interest where  
135 top down inhibitory processes (originating in PFC) modulate the execution or the re-evaluation of choice  
136 outcomes (71). These anatomical regions and attributed functions might be affected by TS  
137 pathophysiology (72)

138 To date it is still an open question whether patients with TS show aberrations in the domain of  
139 intertemporal choice. In the present study, we compared adolescents (Study 1, Hamburg) and adults  
140 (Study 2, Cologne) with TS to controls using two modified temporal discounting tasks. Based on the

141 dopaminergic hyperinnervation model (24) we hypothesized that adolescents and adults with TS will  
142 show differences in temporal discounting compared to controls. We hope to broaden the understanding  
143 of value based decisions in TS on one operational measure of choice impulsivity that may predict, with  
144 unavoidable uncertainty, the vulnerability for short sighted behavior(49,50,73,74).

## 145 **2. Methods and Materials**

### 146 **2.1 Ethics**

147 The Ethics committee of the University of Cologne approved the study (protocol ID: DRKS00011748)  
148 and all participants provided written consent. Patients were recruited at the University Hospital of  
149 Cologne whereas healthy controls were recruited by advertisement. The Ethics committee of the  
150 University Hospital Hamburg approved the second study. Adolescents provided written assent and their  
151 parents provided written consent (PV4439). Adolescents with TS were recruited in the University  
152 Hospital of Hamburg and healthy adolescents were recruited by advertisement.

### 153 **2.2 Study 1 methods (Adolescents)**

#### 154 **2.2.1 Participants**

155 We included 19 adolescents with TS (mean(age):  $\pm 14.21$ , SD: 2.37) and 19 age, education and gender-  
156 matched controls (mean(age):  $\pm 14.21$ , SD: 2.53). All participants underwent a clinical assessment and  
157 performed a modified DD paradigm. Out of 19 adolescents, two were taking medication.

#### 158 **2.2.2 Clinical Assessment**

159 Adolescents were assessed with the YGTSS (75), the PUTS (76) and the Children's Yale-Brown  
160 Obsessive Compulsive Scale (CY-BOCS), a semi structured interview to evaluate OCD severity. For  
161 the CY-BOCS data are available from all the adolescents with TS and 13 controls; in total three  
162 adolescents with TS had a higher score than 12, which is an indicator for an OCD diagnosis (77). The  
163 "Fremdbeurteilungsbogen/Selbstbeurteilungsbogen für Aufmerksamkeitsdefizit-/Hyperaktivitäts-  
164 störungen" (FBB)-ADHD/(SBB)-ADHD is a diagnostic instrument to identify ADHD and includes a  
165 third-party assessment (FBB-ADHD) and self-reporting questionnaire (SBB-ADHS) (78). FBB-ADHD  
166 data is available for all adolescents with TS and 16 controls. SBB-ADHS data is available for 18  
167 adolescents with TS and 17 controls. All adolescents also filled out a questionnaire on demographic  
168 measurements.

#### 169 **2.2.3 Temporal Discounting**

170 The adolescents temporal discounting task consistent of 50 trials whereas patients and controls could  
171 choose between a SS reward (0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 cents) and a constant LL reward (5 cents), which was  
172 available after a varying waiting period (10, 20, 30, 40 or 60 seconds). The LL option was depicted with  
173 a blue circle and the SS option with a red circle both presented on a computer screen. The position of  
174 the red and blue circle was varied on a trial-wise manner whereas choice was indicated with a mouse

175 click (see **Figure 1, supplemental data**). After each choice, the received reward (money) would be  
176 saved either immediately or after the appointed waiting period into a virtual saving account followed by  
177 visual feedback (displayed for 500ms). Thereafter, a blue screen with a black fixation cross was  
178 presented if the subject had chosen the immediate reward. The screen was presented for the same time  
179 the adolescents would have waited, had they chosen the delayed option (e.g. 20s if the waiting time for  
180 5 cents would have been 20s). The overall task time was thereby kept constant, no matter whether  
181 participants chose predominantly SS or LL rewards. On a green bar below the choices, the participants  
182 could see how many trials had passed. Depending on the choices, participants could gain between 2.50  
183 € and 5 € (79).

## 184 **2.3 Study 2 methods (Adults)**

### 185 **2.3.1 Participants**

186 We recruited 25 patients (mean(age):  $\pm 29.88$ , SD: 9.03) with TS diagnosed according to DSM-5 criteria  
187 (80) and 25 age, education and gender-matched controls (mean(age)  $\pm 29.40$ , SD: 9.28). All participants  
188 underwent a clinical assessment, performed a temporal discounting paradigm, including a pretest based  
189 on prior procedures (see 81,82). Out of 25 patients, nine patients were taking medication or  
190 cannabinoids. Five patients were taking antidopaminergic drugs (Aripiprazole, risperidone, tiapride),  
191 one patient was taking an anticonvulsant (Orfiril) one patient was taking a noradrenergic and specific  
192 serotonergic antidepressant (Mirtazapine), and one patient was medicated with two antidopaminergic  
193 drugs (Aripiprazole, risperidone) and a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (Citalopram). One patient  
194 regularly smoked medical cannabis.

### 195 **2.3.2 Clinical Assessment**

196 All participants performed on an equal clinical assessment. They filled out the Obsessive Compulsive  
197 Inventory-Revised (OCI-R) (83) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (84). The Wender Utah  
198 Rating Scale was used to assess ADHD symptoms (85). All participants filled out a short intelligence  
199 test (Leitprüfsystem-3 (LPS 3)) (86), followed by a demographic questionnaire with information on age,  
200 gender, handedness, years of education and current drug or alcohol use. Further, patients with TS  
201 completed an assessment with the Yale Global Tic Severity Scale (YGTTS) (75) and the premonitory  
202 urges scale (PUTS), a self-report scale to identify premonitory urges (76). All questionnaires were in  
203 German.

### 204 **2.3.3 Temporal discounting**

#### 205 ***Behavioral Pretest***

206 All participants underwent an adaptive pretest to estimate an individual a-priori discount-rate via  
207 Maximum Likelihood estimation assuming and hyperbolic model (**Equation 2**, see below) and a  
208 softmax-Choice rule (**Equation 3**, see below). This rate was then used to create subject-specific trials  
209 for the following experimental session (see 81).

210 To create subject-specific trials, we used custom Matlab routines (MATLAB version 8.4.0. Natick,  
211 Massachusetts: The MathWorks Inc) (82). All experiments were administered using Presentation 16.3  
212 (Presentation software; Neurobehavioral Systems, Inc).

### 213 *Experimental session*

214 The DD paradigm consisted of a series of 140 choices between direct (smaller-sooner (SS)) and delayed  
215 (larger-but-later (LL)) monetary rewards. The SS reward of 20€ was labeled as being available  
216 immediately whereas the LL reward was uniformly distributed (depending on the subject-specific pre-  
217 test) between 20.5€ and 80€ and available after 1, 2, 7, 14, 30, 90 or 180 days respectively. Participants  
218 were informed that one trial-choice combination would be selected at random and payed after the task  
219 was completed (see 85,86).

## 220 **2.4 Analysis (Both studies)**

### 221 *Model free analysis*

222 We first analyzed both datasets using model agnostic approaches to avoid possible caveats associated  
223 with model-based analysis, e.g., problems with parameter estimation or the choice for a theoretical  
224 framework (hyperbolic vs. exponential).

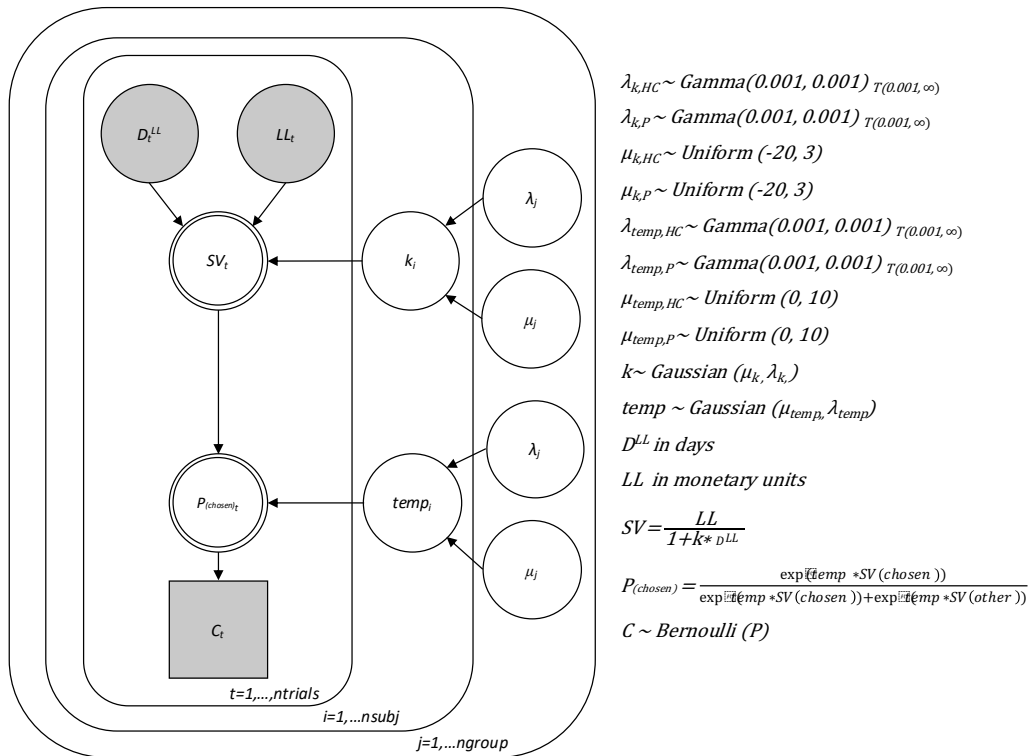
225 Due to task structure in study 1 (adolescents; see above), we used the percentage of LL in contrast to  
226 SS choices as a model agnostic quantification of choice behavior. For comparison we used a two-sided  
227 parametric test on the arc-sin-transformed values of SS vs. LL choices.

228 In study 2 (adults) we computed the area under the empirical discounting curve (*AUC*)(note, due to the  
229 number of varying delays, this procedure does not provide further information when applied to the data  
230 in study 1). In detail, the *AUC* corresponds to the area under the connected data points that describe the  
231 decrease of the subjective value (*y*-axis) over time (delay; *x* axis). Each specific delay was expressed as  
232 a proportion of the maximum delay and plotted against the normalized subjective (discounted) value.  
233 We then computed the area of the resulting trapezoids using **Equation 1**.

$$\frac{x_2-x_1}{\left(\frac{y_1+y_2}{2}\right)} \quad (1)$$

234 Smaller *AUC*-values indicate more discounting (more impulsive choices) and higher *AUC*-values  
235 indicate less discounting (less impulsive choices) (range between zero and one).





236  
 237 **Figure 1. Hierarchical Bayesian model.** Parameter estimates for each subject [ $n = 38$  (study 1);  $n = 50$  (study  
 238 2)],  $k$  (choice impulsivity) and  $temp$  (choice stochasticity) were drawn from different group distributions [ $ngroup$   
 239 = 2 (patients with TS (P)/ healthy controls (HC))] and mapped on the choice data [ $n = 50$  (study 1);  $n = 140$  (study  
 240 2)] for each participant.

241

## 242 **Computational modeling**

243 Based on prior analysis and basic research in the field of temporal discounting we assumed a hyperbolic  
 244 model (87,88) to describe the decrease in subjective value over time for both datasets (**Equation 2**). The  
 245 LL reward that is delivered after a specific delay (D) is devaluated via a subject specific discount rate  
 246 ( $k$ ) that weights the influence of time on the subjective value (SV). A lower  $k$ -parameter reflects more  
 247 patient preferences (reduced discounting) whereas a higher  $k$ -parameter reflects steeper discounting:

$$SV = \frac{LL}{(1+kD)} \quad (2)$$

248

249 After devaluating the delayed option our model assumes that subjects compare the devaluated LL reward  
 250 with the 20€ SS trial by trial and select the most valuable action under the influence of subject specific  
 251 noise. This decision process between both subjective values is modeled by a simple softmax choice rule  
 252 (**Equation 3**) where a free  $temp$  parameter scales the influence of value differences on choice. A high  
 253  $temp$  value implies that participants decide purely on value differences whereas lower values indicates  
 254 higher choice stochasticity. For limit of  $temp=0$  choices are random.



$$P(\text{chosen}) = \frac{\exp(SV_{\text{chosen}} * \text{temp})}{\exp(SV_{\text{other}} * \text{temp}) + \exp(SV_{\text{chosen}} * \text{temp})} \quad (3)$$

255 Models were fit using a hierarchical Bayesian framework to estimate parameter distributions via Markov  
256 Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) sampling with Just Another Gibbs Sampler (JAGS) (89). Individual choice  
257 data were modeled using **Equations 2 and 3** (see above). Single subject parameters were drawn from  
258 group-level normal distributions, with mean and variance hyper-parameters that were themselves  
259 estimated from the data (see **Figure 1**). Model convergence was assessed via the RHAT statistic  
260 (Gelman-Rubinstein convergence diagnostic) where values < 1.01. (two chains) were considered  
261 acceptable.

262 Group comparisons were conducted by examining the differences in posterior distributions per  
263 parameter of interest. The strength of evidence for directional effects was examined by computing  
264 directional Bayes Factors for each group level difference distribution. A Bayes factor > 3 yields positive  
265 evidence (90).

## 266 **3. Results**

### 267 **3.1 Study 1 (Adolescents)**

#### 268 **3.1.1 Demographic characteristics and clinical assessment**

269 Demographic and clinical characteristics between adolescents with TS and controls are shown in **Table**  
270 **1**. For demographic, clinical and neuropsychological characteristics of adolescents with TS and controls  
271 adjusted for multiple comparison see **Table 1, supplemental data**.

272

273

274 **Table 1.** Demographic, clinical and neuropsychological characteristics of adolescents with TS and healthy  
 275 controls.

|                           | Adolescents with TS |       | Healthy controls |       | <i>T/U/ X<sup>2</sup></i> | <i>p</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------|------------------|-------|---------------------------|----------|
|                           | (n=19)              |       | (n=19)           |       |                           |          |
|                           | Mean                | SD    | Mean             | SD    |                           |          |
| Age (Years) <sup>a</sup>  | 14.21               | 2.37  | 14.21            | 2.53  | 0.000                     | 1.000    |
| Male/Female <sup>c</sup>  | 13/6                | -     | 78.9             | -     | 0.543                     | 0.467    |
| Right-handed <sup>c</sup> | 14/19               | -     | 84.2             | -     | 1.276                     | 0.435    |
| Current medication        | 2/19                | -     | -                | -     | -                         | -        |
| YGTSS impairment          | 16.00               | 8.00  | -                | -     | -                         | -        |
| YGTSS                     | 23.37               | 12.38 | -                | -     | -                         | -        |
| PUTS                      | 19.53               | 5.61  | -                | -     | -                         | -        |
| FBB-ADHD <sup>b</sup>     | 0.38                | 0.26  | 0.82             | 0.48  | -3.226                    | 0.093    |
| SBB-ADHD <sup>a</sup>     | 0.39                | 0.22  | 0.68             | 0.39  | 88.0                      | 0.497    |
| CY-BOCS <sup>b</sup>      | 6.84                | 6.31  | 0.08             | 0.277 | 21.50                     | <0.001   |

276 ADHD, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; CY-BOCS, Children's Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale;  
 277 (FBB)-ADHD/(SBB)-ADHD, Fremdbeurteilungsbogen/Selbstbeurteilungsbogen für Aufmerksamkeitsdefizit-  
 278 /Hyperaktivitätsstörungen; PUTS, Premonitory Urge for Tics Scale; TS, Tourette syndrome; YGTSS, Yale Global  
 279 Tic Severity Scale.

280 a. T-test was used because data was normally distributed.

281 b. Mann Whitney U test was used because data was not normally distributed.

282 c.  $X^2$  square test.

283

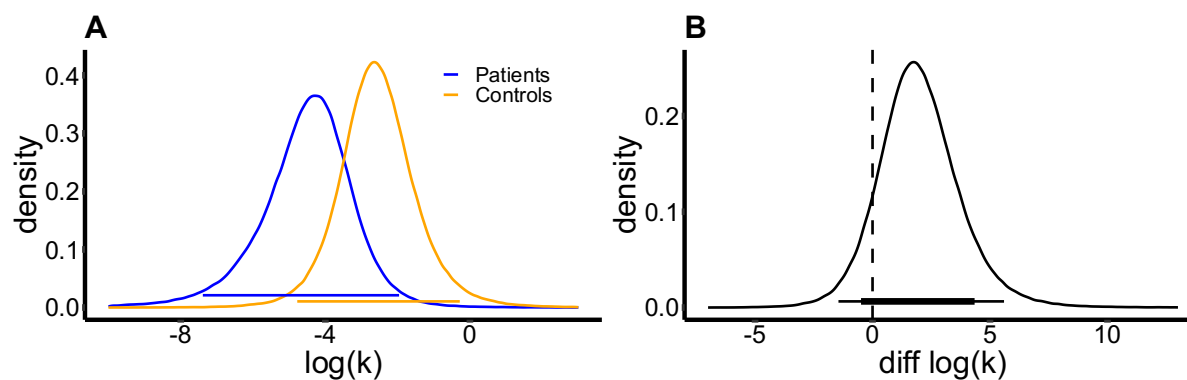
### 284 3.1.2 Temporal discounting

#### 285 *Model free analysis*

286 Controls chose the LL reward in 48.3 % of all cases whereas adolescents with TS chose the that option  
 287 in 58.4 % of all trials (see **Figure 2, supplemental data**). Before using a parametric-test we applied an  
 288 arcsin-transformation on all mean choice proportions (by participant) and then tested for group  
 289 differences. Even though patients with TS did choose the LL option around 10% more often both groups  
 290 did not differ significantly ( $T=1.0646$ ;  $df = 35.83$ ;  $p = 0.29$ ).

291

292



293  
294 **Figure 2.** (A) Group level hyperparameter distributions of  $\log(k)$  parameter for adolescents with TS (blue) and  
295 healthy controls (orange). (B) Difference distribution of (A) healthy controls minus adolescence with TS. The  
296 black bars indicate the 95% and 85% highest density intervals respectively. 89% of posterior hyperparameter  
297 samples exceed 0 (Note, even though 89% of samples exceed 0, the 85% HDI overlaps with 0. This is due to the  
298 fact that the HDI is computed differently from 10% and 90% quantiles or the subtraction of posterior samples  
299 which are just in Bayesian comparisons of posterior distributions (see Kruschke 2011 for details). In other words  
300 89% of the target distribution from adolescents with TS is lower than the equivalent distribution in healthy controls.  
301 This can be interpreted as a chance of 89% of decreased discounting of delayed rewards in adolescents with TS  
302 when compared to healthy controls.

### 303 **Computational modeling**

304 Examination of the posterior distributions of  $\log(k)$  from the computational model revealed attenuated  
305 impulsive choice (smaller  $\log(k)$ ) in patients with TS: 89.07 % of the  $\log(k)$  posterior difference  
306 distribution (controls *minus* patients) exceeded 0, suggesting steeper discounting of value over time in  
307 controls (**Equation 2**). Computing a directional Bayes Factor (dBF) for the group difference yielded  
308 dBF=8.13, that is, given the data, a reduction in discounting in patients was 8.13 times more likely than  
309 an increase. For analysis of choice stochasticity see **Figure 4, supplemental data**.

310

## 311 **3.2 Study 2 (Adults)**

### 312 **3.2.1 Demographic characteristics and clinical assessment**

313 Demographic and clinical characteristics of patients with TS and controls are shown in **Table 2**. Controls  
314 did not score in any clinically relevant ranges. Neither patients nor controls reported clinically relevant  
315 drug or alcohol abuse.

316

317 **Table 2:** Demographic, clinical and neuropsychological characteristics of patients with TS and healthy controls.

|                                 | Patients with TS<br>(n=25) |       | Healthy controls<br>(n=25) |      | T/U/ X <sup>2</sup> | p     |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|----------------------------|------|---------------------|-------|
|                                 | Mean                       | SD    | Mean                       | SD   |                     |       |
| Age (Years) <sup>a</sup>        | 29.88                      | 9.03  | 29.40                      | 9.28 | 0.185               | 0.854 |
| Male/Female <sup>c</sup>        | 19/6                       | -     | 68.00                      | -    | 0.397               | 0.529 |
| Right-handed                    | 22/25                      | -     | 88.00                      | -    | 0.000               | 1.000 |
| Current medication              | 6/25                       | -     | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| Years of education <sup>b</sup> | 11.68                      | 1.25  | 11.90                      | 1.22 | 250.00              | 0.197 |
| Tourette Onset                  | 8.76                       | 5.13  | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| YGTSS motor                     | 15.84                      | 5.72  | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| YGTSS verbal                    | 12.32                      | 6.36  | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| YGTSS impairment                | 26.80                      | 11.08 | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| YGTSS                           | 54.96                      | 20.78 | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| PUTS                            | 30.02                      | 4.22  | -                          | -    | -                   | -     |
| BDI <sup>b</sup>                | 11.68                      | 9.34  | 5.28                       | 5.19 | 165.50              | 0.004 |
| WURS-k <sup>a</sup>             | 26.12                      | 11.60 | 16.04                      | 9.55 | 3.36                | 0.002 |
| OCI-R <sup>b</sup>              | 20.30                      | 12.06 | 10.92                      | 7.58 | 149.50              | 0.002 |
| LPS-3 <sup>b</sup>              | 55.80                      | 8.25  | 58.60                      | 8.48 | 249.50              | 0.213 |

318 BDI, Becks depression inventory; LPS-3, Leistungsprüfssystem; OCI-R, Obsessive-Compulsive Inventory-  
 319 Revised; PUTS, premonitory urge tic for scale; TS, Tourette syndrome; WURS-k, Wender-Utah-Rating-Scale;  
 320 YGTSS, Yale Global Tic Severity Scale.

321 a. T-test was used because data was normally distributed.

322 b. Mann Whitney U test was used because data was not normally distributed.

323 c. X<sup>2</sup> square test.

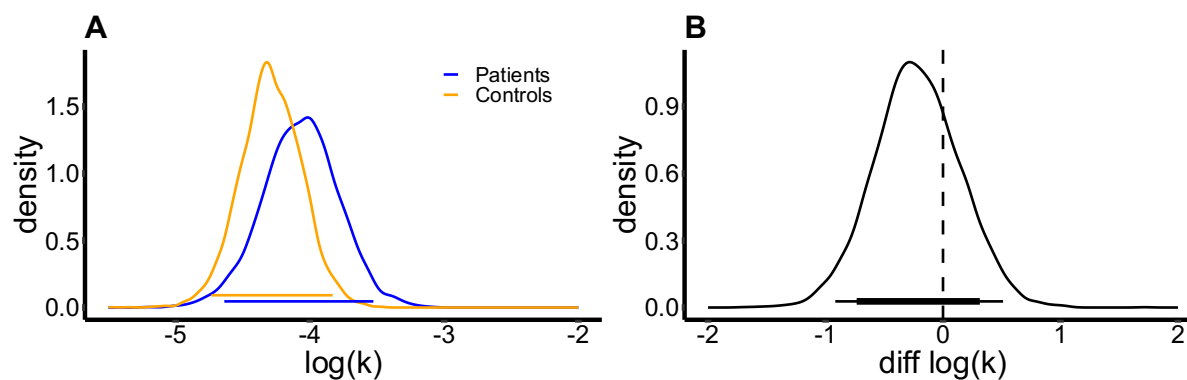
324

### 325 **3.2.2 Temporal Discounting**

#### 326 *Model free analysis*

327 Applying a parametric t-test on the integral of the area under the empirical discounting curve revealed  
 328 no significant differences between patients with TS (mean(AUC) = 0.459) and controls (mean(AUC) =  
 329 0.511) ( $t = -0.8791$ ;  $df = 46.1$ ;  $p = 0.38$ ), see **Figure 3, supplemental data**.

330



331  
332 **Figure 3.** (A) Group level hyperparameter distributions of  $\log(k)$  for patients with TS (blue) and healthy controls  
333 (orange); The orange and blue bars indicate the 95% highest density interval for each group (B) Difference  
334 distribution of hyperparameters shown in (A) - healthy controls minus patients with TS. The black bars indicate  
335 the 95% and 85 % highest density interval respectively. 72 % of the hyperparameter distribution is below 0 which  
336 can be interpreted as a chance of 72% of steeper discounting in patients with TS.

337

### 338 **Computational modeling**

339 In line with our model-agnostic approach examination of the posterior distributions of  $\log(k)$  from the  
340 computational model revealed only minor differences in impulsive choice (smaller  $\log(k)$ ) in controls  
341 as only 38 % of the  $\log(k)$  posterior difference distribution (controls *minus* patients) exceeded 0. This  
342 suggests no significant differences in discounting of value over time. Computing a directional Bayes  
343 Factor (dBF) for the group difference yielded dBF=0.38 (no mentionable evidence), that is, if anything  
344 a descriptive decrease in discounting in controls when compared to patients with TS. In consequence  
345 absolute  $\log(k)$  distributions showed substantial overlap between groups (**Figure 4A**). Since some  
346 patients with TS were treated with antidopaminergic drugs we excluded these six subjects and repeated  
347 our computational analysis. The exclusion of these patients only had marginal effects and the result  
348 pattern did not change. For analysis of choice stochasticity see **Figure 5, supplemental data**.

349 Further, no ties between subject specific choice impulsivity ( $\text{median}(k)$ ) and choice stochasticity  
350 ( $\text{median}(\text{temp})$ ) parameters and our questionnaire data could be detected. In detail, we performed a  
351 simple correlation analysis (corrected for multiple comparisons; note an additional exploratory analysis  
352 without correcting for multiple corrections did not reveal any significant correlation) in between the  
353 before mentioned model parameters and the following inventories: WURSK-k scale, OCI-R and BDI  
354 (see **Table 2, supplemental data**).

## 355 **4. Discussion**

356 We examined temporal discounting in adolescents and adults with TS. Based on neural models of the  
357 etiology of TS we predicted increased temporal discounting in TS due to a putative increase in DA  
358 signaling (23). In contrast to our prediction, computational modeling using hierarchical Bayesian  
359 parameter estimation revealed that adolescent TS patients showed reduced temporal discounting

360 compared to controls. In contrast, we observed little evidence for robust group differences in adult TS  
361 patients.

362 TS is a complex neuropsychiatric disorder that is associated with developmental dopaminergic  
363 anomalies and a failure to control involuntary actions (1,2,24–26). These dopaminergic anomalies may  
364 either cause, enable or enhance tics via inadequate gating of information through the striatum (16). In  
365 the current study, we report data from two temporal discounting tasks to examine if self-controlled  
366 choices are under modulation of TS pathophysiology. We hypothesized that dopaminergic anomalies  
367 might interfere with the valuation of decision options, which are modulated by both dopaminergic  
368 signaling and prefrontal inhibitory control (24–26).

369 The DA hyperinnervation model of TS, in conjunction with some of the empirical findings linking  
370 elevated DA to increased human temporal discounting (24,29), might then predict increased discounting  
371 in patients with TS. However, other studies point towards reductions in temporal discounting due to  
372 pharmacological elevation of DA levels. Generally, the human literature on dopaminergic contributions  
373 to impulsivity is characterized by substantial heterogeneity (91). A further complicating factor is that  
374 dopaminergic effects might be non-linear (92), as summarized in the inverted U-model of DA  
375 functioning (93). However, it is obvious that transient pharmacological dopaminergic interventions in  
376 healthy subjects and long-term abnormal dopaminergic states in neurodevelopmental conditions such as  
377 TS will have markedly different behavioral effects. Nevertheless, our results suggest that the putative  
378 chronic hyperdopaminergic state of TS does not give rise to substantial changes in temporal discounting  
379 in adults.

380 In contrast, we did find evidence for a moderate decrease in temporal discounting in adolescents with  
381 TS when compared to healthy controls. Our analysis revealed that a decrease in temporal discounting in  
382 adolescents with TS was about 8 times more likely than an increase ( $dBF = 8.13$ ). Adolescents typically  
383 show higher discount rates than adults (94,95). This is thought to be attributable to increases in  
384 functional and structural fronto-subcortical connectivity that continue until early adulthood (26,59–61).  
385 Adolescents with TS are constantly faced by tics and the need to control their motor output. Even though  
386 these tics might emerge from complex neurophysiological interactions i.e. hyperactive DA modulated  
387 striatal gating and reduced inhibition of GABAergic interneurons (96,97), one could speculate that the  
388 ability to inhibit tics might foster the ability to inhibit other impulses thereby strengthening cognitive  
389 control more generally (70). The question then arises why such an effect would not likewise translate  
390 into greater self-control during temporal discounting in the adult TS patients as well. One possibility is  
391 that such a “training” account merely affects the developmental trajectory of self-control, such that  
392 adolescents with TS reach adult levels of self-control earlier than their healthy peers. Testing such a  
393 model would of course require longitudinal studies.

394 Additional clinical differences between adolescent and adult TS patients further complicate the  
395 interpretation of the differential effects in the two age groups. Adolescents and adults with TS exhibit  
396 different tic-phenomenology, adolescents exhibit less variability and/or fluctuations in tics as well as

397 additional comorbidities such as autistic spectrum disorders and oppositional defiant disorder (1).  
398 Adolescents who successfully control their tics have a greater likelihood of eventual remission, likely  
399 due to better executive control capabilities (98). In contrast, patients who still exhibit TS in adult life  
400 exhibit attenuated inhibitory control (66). In both samples, the discount rate ( $k$ ) was not significantly  
401 correlated (corrected for multiple comparisons) with ADHD, OCD comorbid symptomatology or the  
402 YGTSS (see **Table 1** and **Table 2, supplemental data**).

403 The present study has several limitations. First, adolescents and adults performed different temporal  
404 discounting tasks with different reward magnitudes (0-4 cents vs. 20-80€) on a different timescale  
405 (immediate up to a minute (adolescents) vs. immediately after the task to up to weeks (adults)). Reward  
406 magnitudes in the range of cents vs. tens of Euros may entail different valuation and/or control processes  
407 (99,100). This precludes direct comparisons in  $\log(k)$  between age groups. Second, we do draw  
408 theoretical conclusions from reward impulsivity to motor inhibition in patients with TS, even though we  
409 do not compare motor inhibition empirically. Further studies should try to further examine the  
410 developmental trajectories of both of them. Third, although only two adolescents with TS took  
411 medication, about a quarter of adult patients ( $n=6$ ) were on antipsychotic medication. An integrative  
412 review showed that most TS medication (i.e.  $D_2$  antagonists) reduce phasic DA, tonic DA or both (24)  
413 and DA dysfunction in cortico-striatal-thalamo-cortical was likely affected by the medication. However,  
414 a control analysis in which all medicated participants were excluded yielded the same pattern of results.  
415 Finally, patients and controls in the two different studies did not complete the exact same set of  
416 questionnaires (i.e. LPS-3).

## 417 **5. Conclusion**

418 The present study assessed temporal discounting in adolescent and adult TS patients, as well as matched  
419 healthy controls. Our data suggest reduced discounting in adolescent TS patients compared to matched  
420 controls. We speculate that this might be due to improved inhibitory functions that affect choice  
421 impulsivity and/or the developmental trajectory of executive control functions. Interestingly, adult  
422 patients with TS exhibited levels of discounting similar to controls. This might be due higher disease  
423 severity in adult patients with TS (e.g., patients who acquired successful tic inhibition during  
424 adolescence might have gone into remission). Future studies would benefit from adopting a longitudinal  
425 approach to further elucidate the developmental trajectory of these effects, and from directly examining  
426 effects of dopaminergic medication on these processes in TS.

## 427 **Acknowledgments**

428 We would like to thank Milena Marx for support in Figure preparation.



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432 3B; Juan Carlos Baldermann 1A, 3B.; Daniel Huys: 1A, 3B; Julia Kerner auch Koerner: 1C, 1B, 3B; Eva  
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434 2A, 2C, 3B.; Jens Kuhn: 1A, 3B.

## 435 **Financial Disclosures for all authors (for the preceding 12 months)**

436 Canan Beate Schüller: Walter and Marga Boll Foundation; Ben Jonathan Wagner: None; Thomas  
437 Schüller: Walter and Marga Boll Foundation; Juan Carlos Baldermann: None; Daniel Huys: None; Julia  
438 Kerner auch Koerner: None; Eva Niessen: None; Alexander Münchau: Commercial research support:  
439 Pharm Allergan, Ipsen, Merz Pharmaceuticals, Actelion; Honoraria for lectures: Pharm Allergan, Ipsen,  
440 Merz Pharmaceuticals, Actelion, GlaxoSmithKline, Desitin and Teva; Support from Foundations:  
441 Possehl-Stiftung (Lübeck, Germany), Margot und Jürgen Wessel Stiftung (Lübeck, Germany), Tourette  
442 Syndrome Association (Germany), Interessenverband Tourette Syndrom (Germany), CHDI; Academic  
443 research support: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG): projects 1692/3-1, 4-1, SFB 936, and FOR  
444 2698 (project numbers 396914663, 396577296, 396474989), Innovationsausschuss of the Gemeinsamer  
445 Bundesausschuss: Translate NAMSE (structural support for the Lübeck Center for Rare Diseases);  
446 Royalties for the book Neurogenetics (Oxford University Press); Advisory Boards: German Tourette  
447 syndrome association; Alliance of patients with chronic rare diseases; Valerie Brandt: Public  
448 Engagement with Research Fund, the ROLI music company, Tourettes Action; Jan Peters: Grants: DFG  
449 PE1627/5-1 und PE1627/5-2; Jens Kuhn: received honoraria from Bayer, Janssen, Lundbeck,  
450 Neuraxpharm, Otsuka Pharma, Schwabe and Servier for lecturing at conferences and financial support  
451 to travel. He has received financial support for Investigator initiated trials from Medtronic GmbH.  
452

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690 of delayed and probabilistic outcomes. *J Exp Psychol Learn Mem Cogn.* 1999;25(2):418–27.

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694 **Supplemental data**

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696 **Tables:**

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698 **Table 1.** Demographic, clinical and neuropsychological characteristics of adolescents with TS and healthy  
 699 controls adjusted for multiple comparison (using holm's method; note: an additional exploratory analysis  
 700 without correcting for multiple corrections did not reveal any significant correlation).

|                            | Patients with TS ( <i>n</i> =19)                   |   | Healthy controls ( <i>n</i> =18)                   |   |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Questionnaire/<br>subscale | median( <i>k</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>temp</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>k</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>temp</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) |
| SBB Attentional            | 0.25 (0.32[1.00])                                  | 0.03 (0.90[1.00])                                     | -0.02 (0.94[1.00])                                 | -0.02 (0.93[1.00])                                    |
| SBB_Motor                  | 0.33 (0.18[1.00])                                  | -0.04 (0.87[1.00])                                    | 0.20 (0.44[1.00])                                  | 0.00 (0.99[1.00])                                     |
| SBB Impulsive              | -0.17 (0.50[1.00])                                 | 0.43 (0.07[0.71])                                     | 0.24 (0.35[1.00])                                  | -0.12 (0.63[1.00])                                    |
| SBB ADHD                   | 0.12 (0.65[1.00])                                  | 0.22 (0.37[1.00])                                     | 0.13 (0.60[1.00])                                  | -0.05 (0.85[1.00])                                    |

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702 **Table 2.** Correlation analysis in adult patients with TS and healthy controls adjusted for multiple  
 703 comparison (using holm's method).

|                            | Patients with TS ( <i>n</i> =25)                   |   | Healthy controls ( <i>n</i> =25)                   |   |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Questionnaire/<br>subscale | median( <i>k</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>temp</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>k</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) | median( <i>temp</i> )/<br><i>r</i> ( <i>p</i> -value) |
| WURSK-k                    | -0.03 (1.00)                                       | -0.14 (1.00)  | 0.29 (1.00)  | 0.09 (1.00)   |
| OCI-R                      | 0.20 (1.00)  | -0.39 (1.00)  | 0.31 (1.00)  | -0.20 (1.00)  |
| BDI                        | -0.18 (1.00)                                       | 0.43 (1.00) *   | 0.28 (1.00)  | 0.03 (1.00)   |

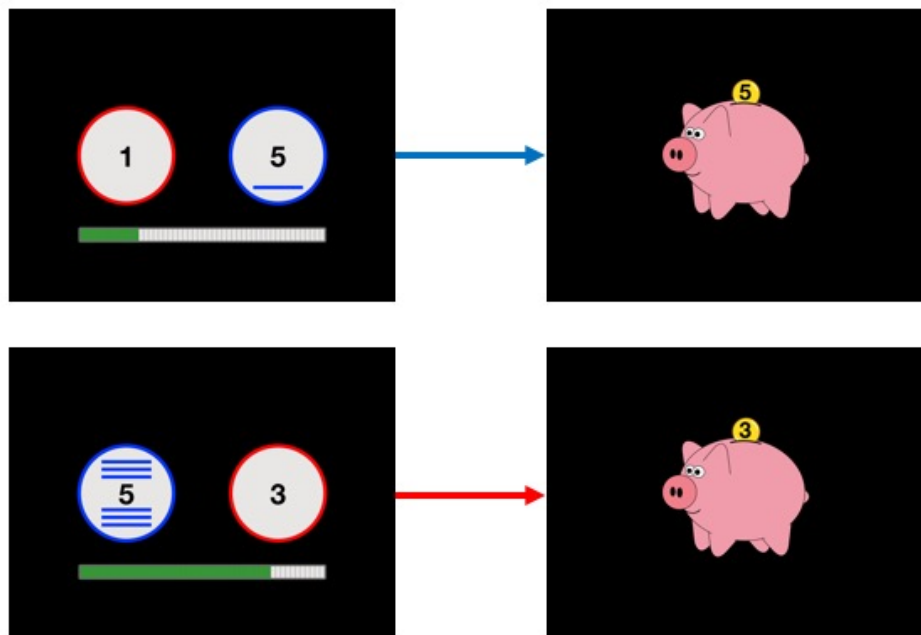
704 BDI, Becks depression inventory; OCI-R, Obsessive-Compulsive Inventory-Revised; TS, Tourette syndrome;

705 WURSK-k, Wender-Utah-Rating-Scale.

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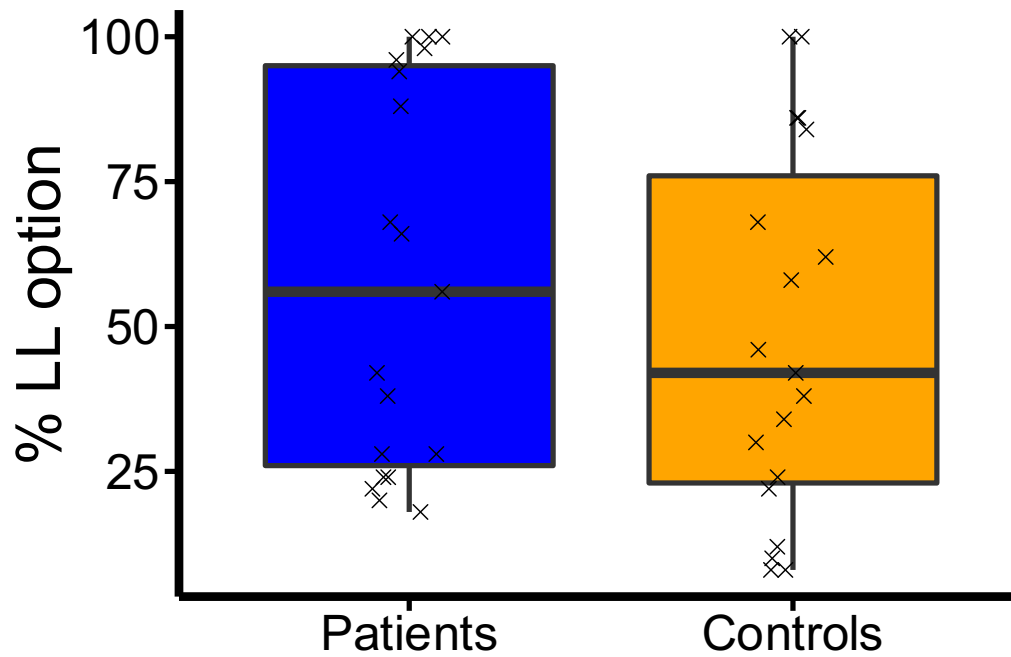
**Figures:**



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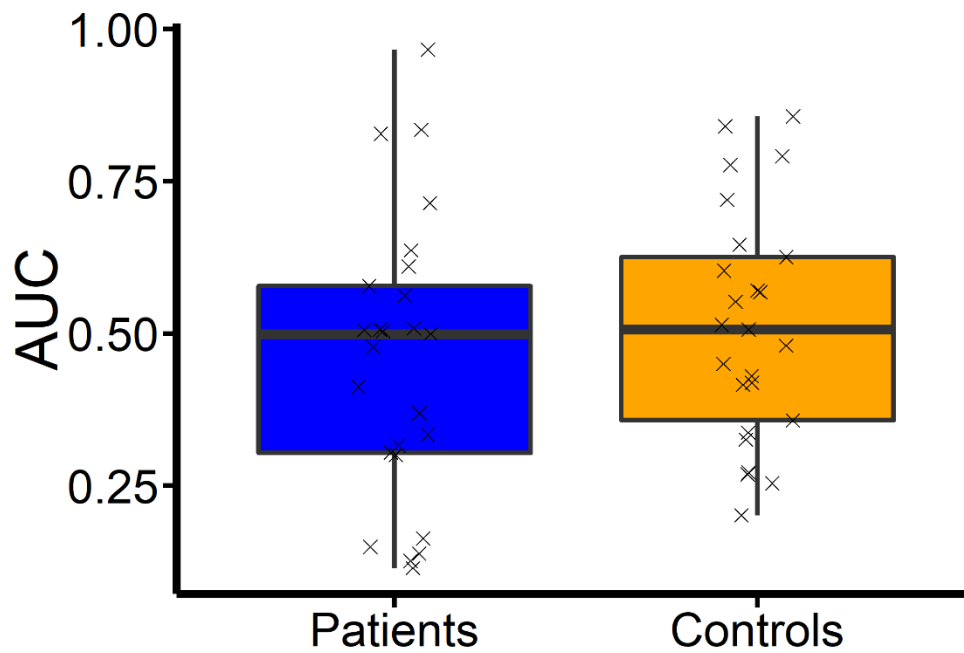
711 **Figure 1:** Example for two trials in the temporal discounting task adapted for children and adolescents. The blue  
712 circle shows the reward (in cents) that the participant will receive if they wait. How long they have to wait is  
713 indicated by the lines, i.e. one blue line = 10s wait, 6 blue lines = 60s wait. The red circle indicates how much the  
714 participant will receive if they move on to the next trial immediately (0-4 cents). Participants received feedback  
715 about the amount earned after every trial (piggy bank). The green bar below the two circles indicates how many  
716 trials the participant has already finished.

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**Figure 2.** Percentage of larger, but later (LL) choices in adolescents with TS and healthy controls.



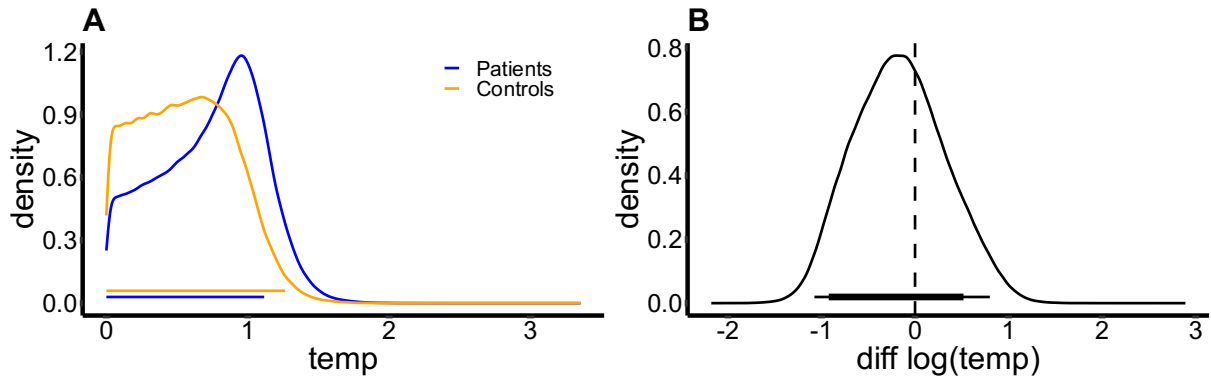
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**Figure 3.** Subject specific measurements of the integral under the empirical area under the curve in adults with TS and healthy controls.

### 727 **Study 2 (adolescent)**

#### 728 *Choice stochasticity*

729 We applied the identical as for  $\log(k)$  to the inverse temperature parameter (see **Equation 3**) and yielded  
730 a dBF of 0.66 (no mentionable evidence) implying no difference in between controls and adolescent  
731 patients with TS concerning value independent noisy choices.



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733 **Figure 4. (A)** Group-level hyperparameter distributions of the decision noise parameter  $temp$  for adolescents with  
734 TS (blue) and healthy controls (orange). **(B)** Difference distribution of  $temp$  hyperparameter healthy controls  
735 minus adolescents with TS.

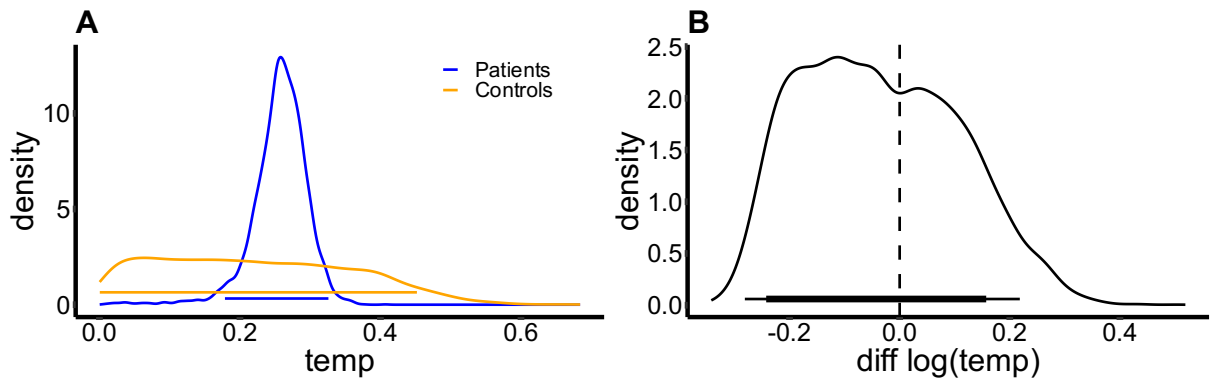
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### 738 **Study 2 (adults)**

#### 739 *Choice stochasticity*

740 The additional analysis for choice stochasticity yielded a  $dBF$  of 0.67 indicating no substantial difference  
741 in decision noise. We observed a substantially higher variance in the decision noise ( $temp$ )  
742 hyperparameter in controls, an effect that was driven by a few participants with very high and some with  
743 very low decision noise. In contrast, in adult patients with TS, observed  $temp$  values were more  
744 homogenous.

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747 **Figure 5 (A)** Group-level hyperparameter distributions of the decision noise parameter  $temp$  for TS patients and  
748 healthy controls. **(B)** Difference distribution of  $temp$  hyperparameter TS patients – healthy controls with 95% and  
749 85% highest density intervals.

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