

## **Essential Tremor (ET)**

Essential tremor is a common movement disorder of the neurological system. It causes involuntary shaking of the hands to start with, and eventually other parts such as head or voice may be involved. For some people the tremor is mild and remains stable for years. It generally worsens with age and can be severe in some people. ET is more obvious when the hands are being used.

ET can develop at any age, but becomes increasingly common on older age. Some medications, such as Asthma medications, as well as fevers, low blood sugar, stress and caffeine can make tremors worse. ET does tend to run in families.

Diagnosis is made on physical and neurological examination, plus medical history. Various tests may be required to exclude other conditions and to give an accurate diagnosis by identifying the underlying cause.

Dr Pascoe will discuss treatment options once an accurate diagnosis is made. Treatment may include certain types of medication, lifestyle changes, such as eliminating or reducing alcohol and caffeine, or seeing an Occupational Therapist for help with daily activities.

Although ET is not life threatening and most cases are mild, for some people ET can be very disabling, making it difficult to perform daily activities.