

# Narcolepsy

Narcolepsy is a chronic neurologic condition for which there is no cure. All people with narcolepsy experience excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) and are unable to control sleep and wakefulness, which can affect their ability to function in everyday situations and seriously impact patients at home, work, and school.



It is estimated that **over 50%** of people living with narcolepsy have not been diagnosed



Symptoms of narcolepsy often start **between the ages of 10 and 25**



EDS is one of the **first symptoms** to develop in people with narcolepsy



For many, the correct diagnosis of narcolepsy can take **over 10 years**

**This condition is often misdiagnosed in some cases due to comorbid conditions, including depression, insomnia, and sleep apnea**

## C.H.E.S.S Recognize the Five Major Symptoms (C.H.E.S.S.)

Not all five symptoms must be present for a diagnosis of narcolepsy

### Cataplexy

The weakening of muscles that occurs with strong emotions like embarrassment, laughter, surprise, or anger. It can cause one's head to drop, face to droop, jaw to weaken, or knees to give way.

### Hypnagogic Hallucination

Often described as vivid and, in many cases, frightening dream-like experiences that occur when falling asleep or waking up.

### Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS)

Everyone with narcolepsy has EDS, a real medical condition that leaves one feeling overwhelmingly tired during the day. People with EDS related to narcolepsy may feel tired all the time, making it difficult to stay alert and awake.

### Sleep Disruption

Often causes one to fall asleep quickly but wake up frequently throughout the night, resulting in poor quality of sleep.

### Sleep Paralysis

Sleep paralysis is the inability to move or speak for a short time when falling asleep or waking up. It may also make one feel as if they can't breathe, which can be a frightening or disturbing experience



## Screening Tools

**A diagnosis of narcolepsy should be made by a sleep specialist, who will review symptoms and conduct appropriate in-lab diagnostic sleep tests.**

### ESS

#### The Epworth Sleepiness Scale

A common tool that doctors use to screen for EDS that evaluates how likely a person is to fall asleep during daily activities.

### SNS

#### The Swiss Narcolepsy Scale

A five-item patient reported scale that assesses the frequency of symptoms that can be used to screen for the presence of narcolepsy with cataplexy.



## Questions to Ask a Specialist

- What causes narcolepsy and its symptoms?
- What do ESS and SNS scores mean?
- What steps do I need to take to be diagnosed with narcolepsy?
- How do narcolepsy symptoms differ among people?
- What else is important to know about narcolepsy?

**axsome**