

Watch out for

- Short Attention Span
- Erratic Behaviour and Mood Swings
- Weight Gain
- Muscle Weakness



Diagnosing Narcolepsy

Follow these steps if you think you have narcolepsy:

- Consult your GP for more information
- Receive a GP referral to book an appointment with a sleep specialist
- A sleep study will be arranged to monitor sleep pattern and brain activity
- Further tests may include a Lumbar Puncture

For more information visit:

narcolepsyireland.org
soundireland.ie



Do you have Narcolepsy?



Narcolepsy Is...

Narcolepsy is a chronic neurological disorder which impairs the brain's ability to regulate the sleep-wake cycle normally.

It is caused by the destruction of Hypocretin, a chemical in the brain that helps stabilise the sleep-wake cycle.

Symptoms:

- Excessive Daytime Sleepiness
- Cataplexy
- Micro Sleep
- Sleep Paralysis
- Hypnagogic Hallucinations



Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS)

EDS is the irresistible urge to sleep during the day. These sleep attacks occur without warning at inappropriate times and places such as in school, at work or while driving.

EDS can happen multiple times a day, usually lasting a few minutes to an hour. Other symptoms such as "brain fog", lack of concentration and exhaustion can be triggered by EDS.

Cataplexy

Cataplexy is the sudden loss of muscle strength triggered by strong emotions like laughter, anger, and embarrassment. These attacks can last a few seconds to several minutes, during which a person is fully conscious but unable to move or speak.

The severity of cataplexy attacks vary from mild facial weakness, slurred speech, buckling knees to total collapse.

People suffering from cataplexy are diagnosed with Type 1 Narcolepsy.



Micro Sleep

Also known as Automatic Behaviour, micro sleep is carrying out or continuing a task unconsciously in moments of extreme sleepiness.

Once awake, a person with narcolepsy will have no recollection of what occurred during micro sleep. For example: If a student experiences micro sleep while writing, their handwriting will turn to scribbles and be illegible.

Micro sleep only lasts a few seconds but can be dangerous in situations such as driving.

If this has happened to you please do not drive until you seek medical attention.

Sleep Paralysis

While waking up or falling asleep, a person finds they are unable to move. During sleep paralysis, a person is still awake which can be very disconcerting.

Episodes of sleep paralysis are usually short, generally lasting from a few seconds to several minutes.

Hypnagogic Hallucinations

Hypnagogic hallucinations are vivid, often frightening dream-like hallucinations and can be hard to distinguish from reality.

They occur during transitions between sleep and wakefulness and can be accompanied by sleep paralysis.

People with narcolepsy also experience vivid dreams and nightmares.

