

## Fast Facts

- Disorder that has periods of overpowering daytime drowsiness and sudden episodes of sleep
  - Occur irrespective of what the person is doing
- Normal process of falling asleep starts with the non-rapid eye movement (NREM) phase. This is when your brain waves slow down significantly. After about an hour of this type of sleep, your brain changes to rapid-eye movement (REM) sleep. This is where most of your dreaming takes place. During REM sleep, your body experiences temporary paralysis in order to prevent it from acting out your dreams
  - A neurochemical, hypocretin, in your brain to help regulate wakefulness and REM sleep
    - Individuals with narcolepsy have lower levels of hypocretin
  - The result in entering into REM sleep without going through NREM sleep first
    - Scientists don't know yet what causes this to occur
    - Typically transpires within 15 minutes of falling asleep
  - Symptoms usually get worse the first few years, but then remain constant

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
-Excessive daytime sleepiness -Fall asleep anywhere at any time without warning  <i>Possible:</i> -Sudden loss of muscle tone (cataplexy) -Sleep paralysis -Hallucinations as you fall asleep (hypnagogic) or as you wake up (hypnopompic)	<i>Medications:</i> -Stimulants - Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) -Serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs) -Tricyclic antidepressants -Sodium oxybate  -Avoid over-the-counter allergy and cold medicines  <i>Lifestyle Changes:</i> -Stick to a specific sleeping schedule -Take during the day at regular intervals -Talk to employer/teachers to devise a way that allows you to take naps, break up monotonous tasks, record meetings/classes and/or stand during meetings/lectures -Get regular, moderate exercise daily -Don't use alcohol or nicotine -If you have to drive long distances, talk to your doctor about the best medicine to keep you awake and if at any point you feel drowsy, stop to take a nap or get out of your car to exercise -Go to a support group or counseling	-No techniques currently available

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