

Narcolepsy in the Classroom

Talking points

- One person in about 2,000 in the United States has or will develop narcolepsy.
- Only around one in four cases of narcolepsy are ever recognized and diagnosed.
- Narcolepsy symptoms are often mistaken for other disorders including ADHD, depression, learning and developmental disorders, psychological and social problems etc.
- People with undiagnosed narcolepsy often self-medicate with caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks) and over-the-counter alertness aids.
- Some of the same medications used to treat ADHD are used to treat narcolepsy.
- Most medical professionals are inadequately trained and experienced to recognize narcolepsy and sleep disorders in general and particularly in children. It is therefore recommended that a neurologist or certified sleep specialist evaluate the child.
- Narcolepsy is a neurological disorder, not a mental disease.
- Narcolepsy is a lifelong neurological disorder with no cure and limited means of reducing symptoms.
- Narcolepsy can affect any person at any age. The typical age of onset includes the school years, usually 10-30 years of age.
- Because of its symptoms, narcolepsy can affect a person's ability to stay awake and/or focus, impacting their school and work performance and ability to participate in social interaction.
- People who have narcolepsy are not lazy or unmotivated, they are sleepy.

Provided courtesy of:

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