

# SleepCaptions

## Additional Hypersomnias

The following list describes some of the less common forms of hypersomnia:

**Hypersomnia Due to a Drug or Substance:** sleepiness due to the ingestion of medications, alcohol, caffeine, or recreational drugs. Sleepiness does not exist when the drug is not present. Some people with this problem find that they are sensitive to a medication, such as an antidepressant or allergy drug. Adjusting the dosage or type of medication may help. For many others, extreme tiredness developed from abusing drugs. Excessive abuse of alcohol, sleeping pills or recreational drugs is the most common cause of this problem. (See also, **Drugs and Sleep**.)

**Hypersomnia Due to a Medical Condition:** excessive tiredness caused by a medical illness. Sleepiness would not exist if the illness was not present. A few examples of severe conditions that cause people to sleep too much include: brain injury, Parkinson's Disease, brain diseases, kidney disease, Epstein-Barre Syndrome and neuro-muscular disease. Sleepiness must be addressed by the doctor treating the disease. If necessary, a sleep specialist will treat sleep-related symptoms. (See also, **Physical Illness and Sleep**.)

**Idiopathic Hypersomnia with Long Sleep Time:** a disabling degree of daytime sleepiness despite nightly sleep of 12 to 14 hours. Drowsiness continues during the day, leaving the person partially asleep, in a state called sleep-drunkenness. Headaches and depression may also develop. It differs from narcolepsy, in which naps can be temporarily refreshing. It also differs from the disabling *fatigue* of illness. This disorder is very rare. Symptoms tend to begin before age 30 and rarely change over time. Good sleep habits along with prescription medications to promote daytime wakefulness may provide some relief.

**Idiopathic Hypersomnia without Long Sleep Time:** like Idiopathic Hypersomnia with Long Sleep Time, a disabling degree of sleepiness. However, nighttime sleep lasts for only 8 to 10 hours. Drowsiness continues all day, leaving the person partially asleep (sleep drunkenness). Headaches,

dizziness or depression may also develop. It differs from the tiredness of narcolepsy or the fatigue of illness. Symptoms usually begin gradually before age 30 and with few exceptions, persist throughout life. A sleep specialist is best equipped to diagnose and treat Idiopathic Hypersomnia. Good sleep habits along with prescription medications to promote daytime wakefulness may provide relief .

**Long Sleeper:** the need for more nighttime sleep than most people need for their age group. Long sleepers need 10 to 12 hours of sleep per night. Sleep is refreshing but long enough to interrupt the following day. It may be difficult to keep up with the demands of school, job, or social activities. Long sleepers experience a lifelong pattern of longer sleep that remains stable throughout life. No treatment is needed. It is important to adapt to the body's need for sleep.

**Recurrent Hypersomnia:** periods of excessive sleepiness that last for a few days to several weeks. Episodes arise anywhere from once to ten times per year. Sleep lasts for 16 to 18 hours per day. People with this disorder awaken only to eat and use the bathroom. Sleep is normal between attacks. Recurrent Hypersomnia differs from sleepiness following a period of deprivation. It also differs from other hypersomnias such as Narcolepsy and Idiopathic Hypersomnia. Recurrent Hypersomnia follows extended periods of normal sleep. There are two forms of recurrent hypersomnia:

>**Klein-Levin Syndrome:** which involves binge-eating, hyper-sexuality, and aggression. Patients have a red face and tend to perspire. This condition should be treated by a sleep specialist. Medications to promote wakefulness may help.

>**Menstrual-Related Hypersomnia:** which begins just months after the first menstrual period and is related to a hormonal imbalance. Birth control pills may help.



## Do I Have An Hypersomnia Sleep Disorder?

I feel excessively tired, even after a full night's rest, or a nap.

I have irresistible sleep attacks

I do things without realizing what I have done.

My excessive tiredness does not respond to good sleep habits.

I sleep for more than ten hours per night.

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## Most Common Insomnias

**Narcolepsy:** a hypersomnia sleep disorder characterized by excessive daytime sleepiness, sleep attacks, cataplexy, and hypnagogic hallucinations

**Periodic Limb Movement Syndrome (PLMS):** repetitive movement of the limbs during sleep, which fragments sleep, making even a long rest unproductive!

**Insufficient Sleep Syndrome:** a disorder of excessive sleepiness related to continual failure to get enough sleep, which leads to chronic, excessive daytime sleepiness.

## Hypersomnias

**Hypersomnia:** (hi per som nee ya) [hyper = over or excessive, plus somnus =sleep] An inability to attain wakefulness, despite adequate amounts of sleep.

People with Hypersomnias are tired no matter how much they've slept. Very often, they cannot keep from falling asleep at inappropriate times. Like insomnias, hypersomnias may be transient, acute, or chronic. Chronic hypersomnias require



## Need more information?

Visit the SleepMedicine Education web site at: [sleepmedicineeducation.com](http://sleepmedicineeducation.com) for additional publications. See also:

**SleepIssues:** "Can't Wake Up?"

**SleepGuides:** "Treating Sleep Disorders"

To schedule an appointment at any Sleep Medicine Centers location, visit

[www.sleepmedicinecenters.com](http://www.sleepmedicinecenters.com)

or call:

(716)92-DREAM

(877)53-SNORE



An estimated 150,000 people in the United States have undiagnosed narcolepsy, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI).

Sleep Medicine Reviews reported that 1-4% of the general population experiences insufficient sleep and excessive sleepiness.

## Did You Know?

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), Narcolepsy affects 1 in 2000 people or 135,000 people in the general United States population.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine reports a high prevalence of sleep disorders (46%) and of excessive daytime sleepiness (25%) in patients with traumatic brain injury.