

# Strategies for Holistic Narcolepsy Management

## Minimizing Cardiovascular Risk While Maximizing Narcolepsy Treatment

### Narcolepsy Facts

Patients with narcolepsy have frequent, unpredictable transitions between sleep–wake states

**Median age of onset:**  
16 years  
(range: infancy to old age)

**Prevalence:**  
~1 in 2000 people in the general US population

**Underrecognized and underdiagnosed:** estimated <50% diagnosed

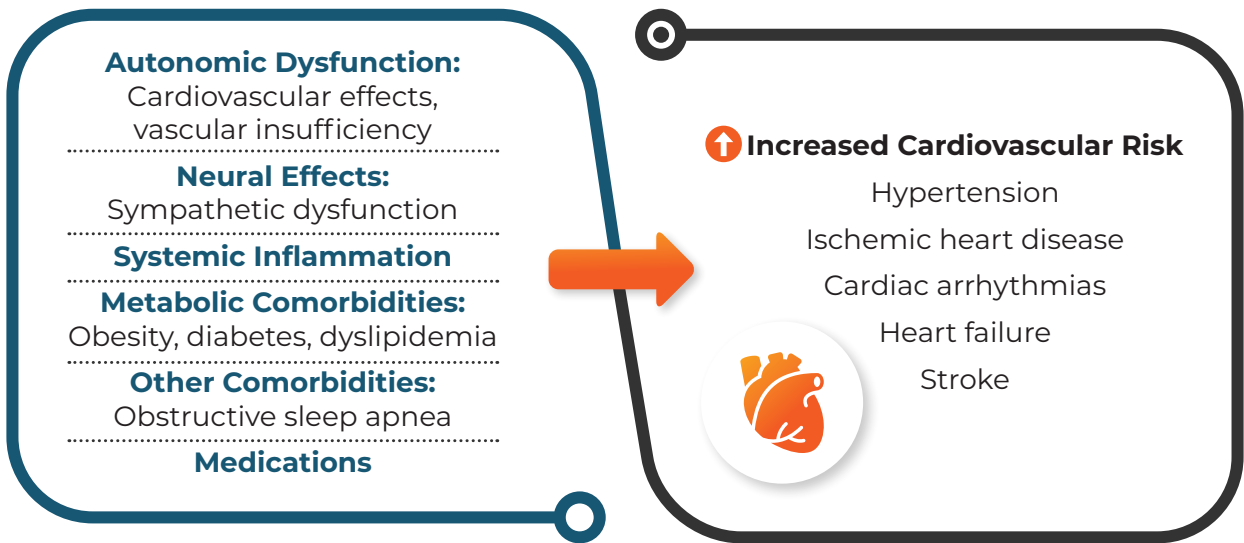
- **Time to diagnosis:** 8-10 years
- **Median age of diagnosis:** 33 years (significantly later than median age of onset)

**Treatable** but not curable—lifelong condition

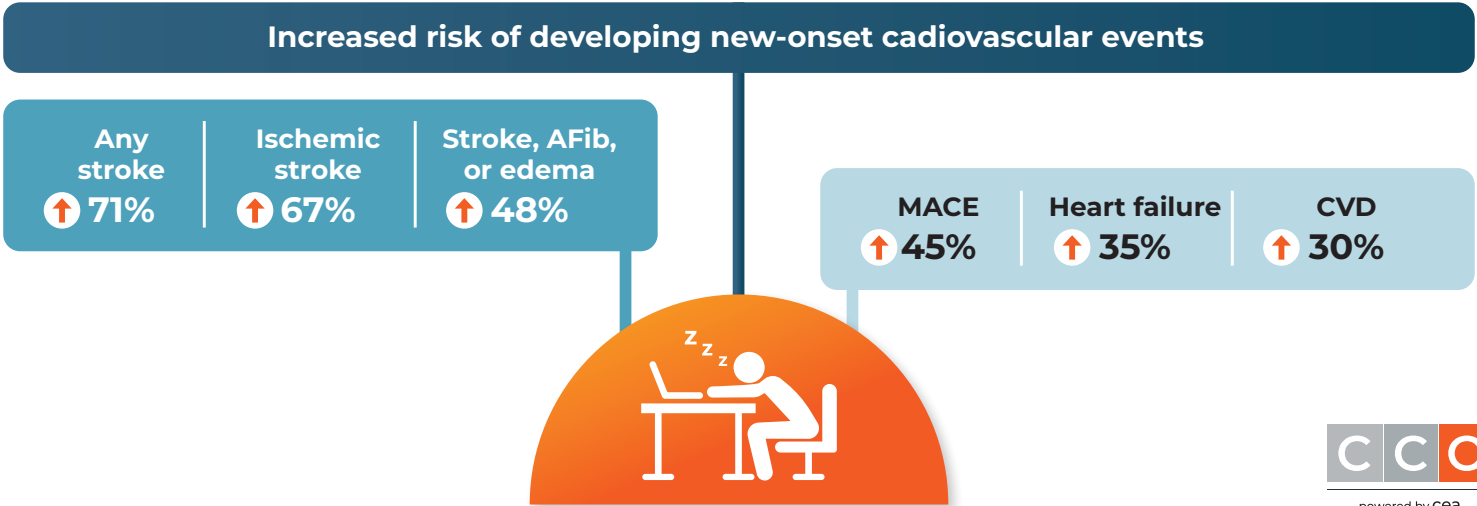
**Characterized by:**

- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- REM-related phenomena
- Disturbed nocturnal sleep

### Cardiovascular Associations in Narcolepsy



### Narcolepsy and Cardiovascular Facts



## Ways to Minimize Cardiovascular Risk

- Lifestyle modifications for reducing cardiovascular risk in patients with narcolepsy
  - Weight reduction, exercise, dietary measures, sleep hygiene discontinue any tobacco use
  - Treatment of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes
- Sodium and cardiometabolic risk
  - The American Heart Association recommends total daily sodium intake of <1500 mg/day and 2300 mg/day as the upper limit
  - The National Academy of Sciences established a threshold of 2300 mg/day, above which reductions in sodium intake are expected to reduce chronic disease risk
  - Possible consequences of excessive sodium intake may include: fluid retention, heart failure, hypertension, stroke, cardiomyopathy, renal disease

### Pharmacologic management of narcolepsy

#### For Sleepiness

Amphetamines/amphetamine like  
(some preparations)

- Methylphenidate
- Dextroamphetamine/amphetamine
- Dextroamphetamine
- Amphetamine

Modafinil/armodafinil

Oxybates

- Sodium oxybate
- Calcium/magnesium/potassium/sodium oxybate (ie, lower sodium oxybate)
- Once-nightly sodium oxybate

Solriamfetol

Pitolisant

#### For Cataplexy

Oxybates

- Sodium oxybate
- Calcium/magnesium/potassium/sodium oxybate (ie, lower sodium oxybate)
- Once-nightly sodium oxybate

Pitolisant

Not FDA approved but often used off label

- SNRIs (eg, venlafaxine)
- SSRIs (eg, fluoxetine)
- Tricyclic antidepressants

### Consider comorbid cardiovascular diseases in treatment selection

|                       | CVD/CHF | Cardiac, Structural | Arrhythmias | Long QT or FH |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Modafinil/armodafinil | —       | XX<br>(LVH/MVP)     |             |               |
| Methylphenidate       | XX      | XX                  | XX          |               |
| Amphetamines          | XX      | XX                  | XX          |               |
| Oxybates              | —       |                     |             |               |
| Pitolisant            | XX      |                     | XX          | XX            |
| Solriamfetol          | XX      |                     | XX          |               |

XX contraindication; — caution.

*AFib*, atrial fibrillation; *aHR*, adjusted HR; *CHF*, congestive heart failure; *CVD*, cardiovascular disease; *LVH*, left ventricular hypertrophy; *MACE*, major adverse cardiovascular events; *MVP*, mitral valve prolapse; *REM*, rapid eye movement; *SNRI*, serotonin–norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor; *SOREMP*, sleep-onset REM period; *SSRI*, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor.

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