

## **Inaugural NYC Event Raises Nearly Half a Million Dollars to Support Narcolepsy Research, Awareness and Education**

*Ginger Zee of ABC News Served as Honorary Emcee at Wake Up Narcolepsy's Shadows to Light Gala*

**NEW YORK, NY, September 23, 2024** – [Wake Up Narcolepsy](#) (WUN), a national leader in Narcolepsy advocacy, proudly hosted its inaugural Shadows to Light Gala in New York City on Friday evening, September 20, 2024. This landmark event, the first large-scale in-person gala dedicated to Narcolepsy awareness in the United States, raised \$450,000. The funds will be instrumental in furthering Narcolepsy education and awareness, expanding supportive resources for individuals and their families and accelerating the development of improved treatments and, ultimately, a cure. Through the collective efforts of dedicated supporters and the broader community, Wake Up Narcolepsy is one step closer to bringing Narcolepsy out of the shadows and into the light.

The event brought together influential members of the Narcolepsy community, including patients, advocates, healthcare professionals and researchers, to shed light on this often-misunderstood sleep disorder, help people to recognize the signs and symptoms and to support ongoing efforts for research and advocacy.

“Our mission is to educate and empower individuals affected by Narcolepsy and raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of excessive daytime sleepiness – ultimately helping us to reach the many individuals left undiagnosed,” said Monica Gow, Co-Founder of Wake Up Narcolepsy. “This event is the pinnacle of our efforts thus far. We are humbled that so many influential members from in and around the Narcolepsy community felt passionate enough to come together and help us further that mission.”

Ginger Zee, Chief Meteorologist & Chief Climate Correspondent at ABC News, served as the event’s honorary emcee.

“While Narcolepsy is slowly becoming better understood, it remains massively underdiagnosed,” said Zee. “Bringing together our collective voices through events like the Shadows to Light Gala helps us to raise greater awareness of the condition and make significant strides toward more treatment options and a cure.”

The event featured stories from inspiring individuals living with Narcolepsy, including Mia Grisco of the event’s Mission Family; a silent auction that included items such as signed copies of former Bachelorette Hannah Brown’s latest book *Mistakes We Never Made* and her memoir titled *God Bless This Mess*; prominent guests like Dr. Emmanuel Mignot of Stanford University, who discovered the gene marker for Narcolepsy; and awards honoring exceptional individuals who have made significant contributions in the areas of Narcolepsy treatment, research and advocacy. It also featured a VIP Meet & Greet with key opinion leaders, along with an Exclusive Educational Forum that brought together leading experts in the field to address the current state of diagnosis and management, as well as their takes on the future directions that will better support people with Narcolepsy.

Wake Up Narcolepsy’s Shadows to Light Gala was held at the New York Athletic Club on Friday, September 20, 2024, from 6:00 – 10:00 PM EDT. 2024 Shadows to Light Gala Diamond Sponsors included

Avadel Pharmaceuticals, FFF Enterprises and Jazz Pharmaceuticals. To learn more about Wake Up Narcolepsy, visit <https://www.wakeupnarcolepsy.org/>.

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### **About Narcolepsy**

Narcolepsy is a lifelong neurological condition that impedes the brain's ability to regulate sleep and wake cycles. It affects 1 in every 2,000 individuals with a genetic predisposition activated by an environmental trigger. Typical onset of Narcolepsy occurs between the ages of 10 and 20, but can also occur in young children. Symptoms vary from individual to individual, with some cases being more severe than others. In individuals with Narcolepsy, aspects of rapid eye movement (REM) sleep intrude on wakefulness while wakefulness intrudes on their sleep.

Individuals with Narcolepsy may quickly enter REM sleep without first experiencing non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep at night and during the day. Some of the characteristics of Narcolepsy include cataplexy, sleep paralysis and hallucinations. On average, it takes 6-10 years to accurately diagnose Narcolepsy.

### **About Wake Up Narcolepsy**

Founded in 2008, Wake Up Narcolepsy (WUN) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to driving Narcolepsy awareness, education and research toward improved treatments and a cure. For more information, please visit <https://www.wakeupnarcolepsy.org/> or contact [info@wakeupnarcolepsy.org](mailto:info@wakeupnarcolepsy.org).

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