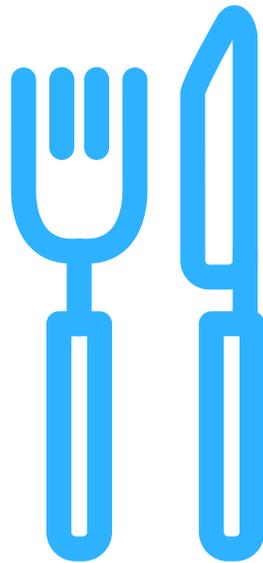




THE NARCOLEPSY DIET EBOOK

BY PETER CONLEY



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My Story

Hello fellow sleepy friends.

My name's Peter and I have Narcolepsy. I write at www.narcolepsycoach.com. I built that website in order to inspire other PWN to live a more fulfilling life with this disease. In addition to that I hope to provide others the best online resources on how to live with Narcolepsy.

To give you some background on me: I was diagnosed with Narcolepsy (no cataplexy) in June 2012.

You can read my story here: narcolepsycoach.com/my-story



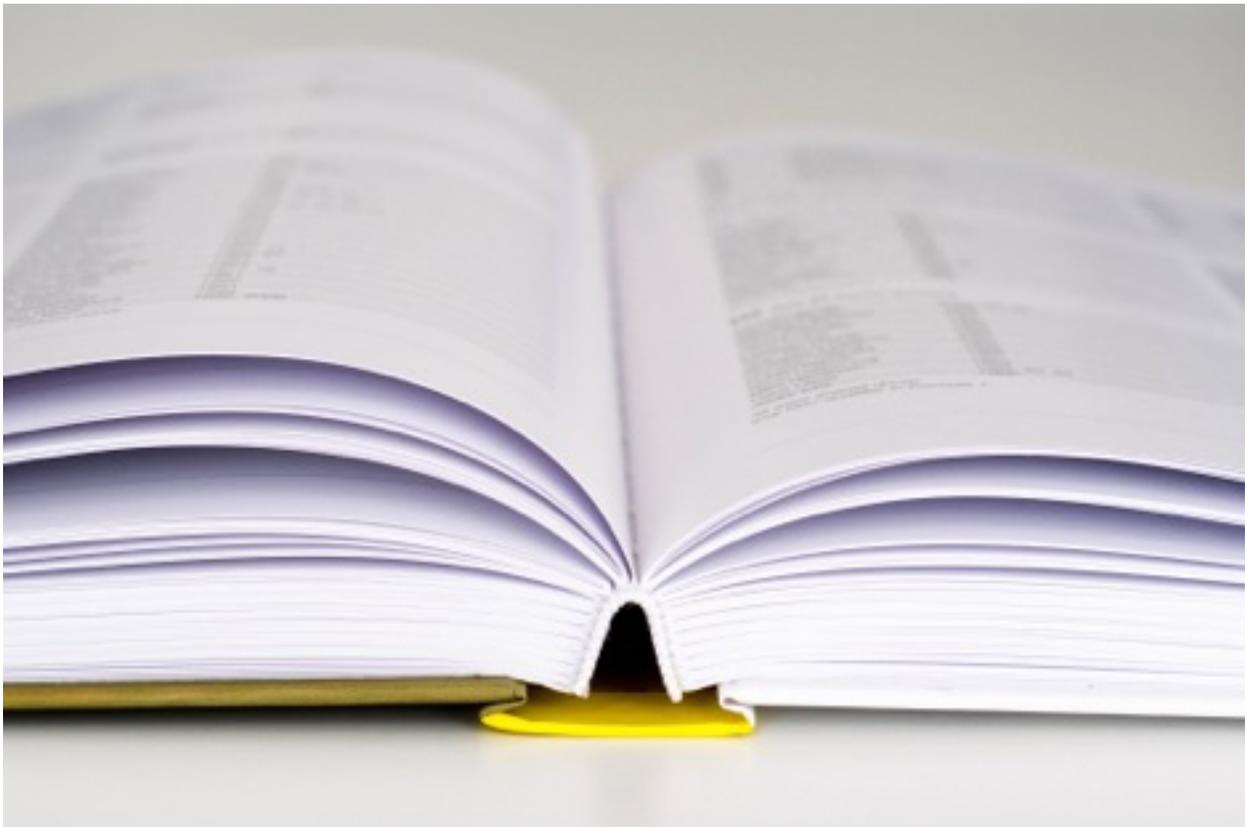
Since then I've scoured the internet, spoken to countless sleep specialists, and done some self experimentation in hopes to better manage my narcolepsy.

I can honestly say that changing my diet has been HANDS DOWN the biggest factor in diminishing the effects of my narcolepsy. I wrote this book to provide other PWN tips on diet, eating habits, and to show others what I personally eat.

The second biggest change happened to be my mindset, more specifically feeling like I'm not alone with this disease. That shift happened because of one book:

Wide Awake and Dreaming

It's written by Julie Flygare. She deserves a round of applause. You can check out the book via the link above.



Back on to diet;

What I have wrote below has massively lessened my EDS symptoms and has improved my sleeping at night.



**If I could stress one thing it would be this: Make sure that you actually act on the information given here. Consuming information is great, but it's the action and implementation of this diet that will actually change your symptoms. So please, pretty please, do all you can to change your eating habits to better your life. It's helped me more than I can ever convey through words. **

So without further adieu lets get into the book!

The effect of digestion on the body

Believe it or not digesting food is one of the most energy demanding tasks our bodies go through. The more processed the food the harder it is for our digestion systems make it to break it down.

I have found that the closer I keep to a whole foods diet, or foods that are low glycemic, the less my narcolepsy bothers me. I've noticed that the more energy it takes for food to be digested, the less my body focuses on keeping me awake.

Changing my diet has been the most impactful improvements when it comes to managing my narcolepsy.

If you still are eating a diet full of complex carbs, sugars, and caffeine I strongly urge you to change what you eat.

Here's an article that will further breakdown the science of digestion:
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/320370-how-many-calories-does-digestion-use-up/>



"The [calories you burn simply digesting food](http://discovermagazine.com/) account for 5 to 15 percent of your energy expenditure"
-<http://discovermagazine.com/>

The difference of low glycemic index food vs. high glycemic index food.

First off, What is the glycemic index?

Google will tell you that...

What is the glycemic index? ^

The **Glycemic Index (GI)** is a relative ranking of carbohydrate in foods according to how they affect blood glucose levels. Carbohydrates with a **low GI** value (55 or less) are more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised and cause a **lower** and slower rise in blood glucose and, therefore insulin levels.

Low glycemic index food can be defined as:

Foods that are digested slowly leaving you feeling full for longer and allowing you to eat less calories without feeling hungry. Foods that are 55 or lower on the index are considered to be low glycemic.

Some examples of LGI Foods:

100% stone-ground whole wheat or pumpernickel bread
oatmeal (rolled or steel-cut)
oat bran
muesli Pasta
converted rice
barley
Sweet potato
corn

High glycemic index foods can be defined as:

Foods that are digested quickly. Foods that are 70 or higher on the index are considered to be high glycemic.

Some examples of HGI foods:

Sugar
Rice
White potatoes
Cereal
Flour

Source:

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/understanding-carbohydrates/glycemic-index-and-diabetes.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

The higher glycemic index a food is the more likely it is to effect your narcolepsy. The more processed a food is, that typically correlates with a high sugar level. Which will adversely effect your EDS. A high spike in glucose levels in the blood will result in PWN correcting by causing you to be drowsy.

Lesson learned

Don't eat this:



Eat this:



One more time.

This:



= good

This:



= bad for your narcolepsy.

My opinion

In my opinion digestion effects narcolepsy in the following way; When ever you eat something that takes a lot of energy to be digested, blood rushes to the stomach and focuses less on the brain. By having less resources to keep our “broken brains” alert this can trigger EDS.

I have found the best strategy to be sticking to one of the diets mentioned below.

What are those kinds of foods you ask?
And how much of each should I eat?

Don't worry! I got you!

Let's move onto Macro nutrients.....

Macro nutrients



All food can be broken down into three Macronutrients:

1. -Carbs
2. -Fat
3. -Protein

You may think you know how to fit foods into these three buckets but you may be surprised to find out what foods are what. For example, did you know that broccoli, peppers, and potatoes would all be classified as Carbs? Did you know that fish is both a fat and a protein? We've been programmed to believe that all fat is bad..which just isn't true.

Let's start with Fat.

Let me be clear real quick. When I say "fat" I mean dietary fat. Not body fat. Fats are found in all kinds of foods and are in multiple forms; unsaturated and saturated. Fat can be found on the back of a food package on the nutrition label. It's broken down into these categories:

unsaturated
saturated
trans fat

Here are some examples of foods that are classified as fats:

Avocados
Olive Oil
Nut Butters
Fish

For a more in-depth article on fat try reading: <https://www.verywell.com/what-is-dietary-fat-3496105>

Also be sure to check out: <https://www.verywell.com/why-eating-fat-keeps-you-healthy-3121407>

On to Protein.

Most people are aware that this macro nutrient is contained in meat. Protein also exists in bread, cheese, and other kinds of foods.



Here are some common foods that contain high amounts of the macro nutrient protein:

Poultry
Almonds
Steak
Eggs

Protein is the macro nutrient that the public is most familiar with. When speaking to people about protein everyone generally understands what kinds of food has protein and what foods don't contain it.

If you care to learn more about protein feel free to dive into these articles:

<http://discovergoodnutrition.com/2014/10/what-is-protein/>

Last but not least; Carbs!



You may be slightly surprised as to what foods fall under this massive umbrella of “carbs”. I’m referring to the classification of carbs in the macro nutrient sense. Not just the breads and pastas we label as carbs.

Carbs can also be:

Broccoli
Spinach
Sweet Potatoes
Candy
Bread
Peppers

If you’re unsure about which category a food falls under it’s most likely carbs. The standard American diet is incredibly carb heavy. The sugar heavy kinds especially. Even if you’re eating straight vegetables a balanced diet still could use proteins and healthy fats. It’s best to moderate your carb intake.

Foods you should avoid

Sugar

Sugar should be consumed in moderation by all accounts. Especially by PWN. Excess sugar consumption can lead to excess body fat, mood swings, unstable blood sugar, and a whole array of diseases. I found that moderating my sugar intake to less than 36 grams per day has had a MASSIVE effect on my alertness. I can honestly say it’s been one of the biggest factors of relief on my EDS. I highly suggest you do an audit of your own diet and decide TODAY to reduce your sugar intake.

Where is da sugar?

Sugar not only is found in candy but also in breads, starches, and other processed foods. You can identify sugar by looking on the back of most packing on the nutritional label. Sugar is measured in grams.



Gram daily limit

My naturopathic doctor suggested to use these guidelines for your daily sugar intake:

24 grams per day for females.

36 grams per day for males.

Obviously there is a range based on BMI and genetics but if you're unfamiliar with how sugar effects you I would stick to these general guide lines.

Caffeine



For people with Narcolepsy we've all surely heard this before. But just to reiterate, you should absolutely moderate your caffeine intake. For most PWN, myself included, caffeine is a quick pick-me-up that is shortly followed by a crash. I will however use a pre-work out supplement that has a modest amount of caffeine in the mornings. I personally aim to keep my daily caffeine consumption below 50 mg a day.

Alcohol

I have cut down my personal consumption to about 1-3 drinks a week. Firstly, alcohol has a ton of sugar. So just by aiming to keep my sugar intake below 36 grams daily is a hard target to hit with alcohol in the mix. Secondly, drinking alcohol on regular basis makes it harder for me adhere to my other healthy habits. I find myself much more inclined to eat worse or not stick to my sleep schedule when I'm drinking. Thirdly, alcohol fragments your sleep. For people that already have problems with consistent sleep at night this certainly doesn't help.



Study on alcohol and sleep: <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/aa41.htm>
Caffeine and sleep: <http://www.aasmnet.org/jcsm/ViewAbstract.aspx?pid=29198>

Narcolepsy Friendly Diets

What you should eat

I use the word should very loosely. Everyone has their own personal dietary needs, food allergies, and caloric necessities. BUT there are universal principals you can abide by in order to produce more energy. Such as limiting high glycemic foods, drastically reducing sugar, and limiting your alcohol intake. In this section of the book I'm going to go through what has personally helped me. I have experimented with all sorts of diets but I found 3 specific ones to work best with my narcolepsy.

They are:

1. Whole Foods Diet



A whole food diet consists of optimizing your nutrient consumption from natural sources and avoiding nutrient-poor **processed** foods. Whole foods mainly include plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits and nuts, and animal foods such as eggs, meat, fish and **poultry**.

Examples of meals with the Whole Foods Diet:

Breakfast

- Eggs
- Avocados
- Cottage cheese and fruit
- Yogurt with granola

Lunch

- Salad with organic chicken and veggies
- Burrito bowl with avocado
- Curry or stir-fried entree with whole grain brown rice

Dinner

- A piece of meat or fish with roasted veggies
- Whole grain pasta with fresh tomato sauce and vegetables
- Roasted squash, eggplant or Portabello mushroom over salad
- Homemade chili

<https://medium.com/@erinfrey/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-whole-foods-diet-e4025c3d116c>

Recommended Whole Foods Cook Books:

[Whole Food Diet: The 4 weeks challenge cookbook meal plan to weight loss.](#)

[The Whole Life Nutrition Cookbook: Over 300 Delicious Whole Foods Recipes](#)

2. Ketogenic Diet



A ketogenic diet is centered around optimizing the amount of healthy fats you eat in proportion to the other macro nutrients; protein & carbs. The typical macronutrient ratio of a Ketogenic diet is:

60-75% from dietary fat
15-30% from protein
5-10% from carbohydrates

Mr. Google says:

The ketogenic diet (often termed keto) is a very low-carb, high-fat diet that shares many similarities with the Atkins and low-carb diets. It involves drastically reducing carbohydrate intake, and replacing it with fat. The reduction in carbs puts your body into a metabolic state called ketosis. Jun 17, 2017

*At first you may worry about the cravings you get with a ketogenic diet. They will subside. Some very interesting things happen once you switch over to healthy fats as an internal fuel source instead of sugars. This may be one of the harder diets to transition to but it's had an **amazing** effect on my energy levels ever since using it.

Foods that are staples under the Ketogenic diet:

- Fatty nuts and seeds: Cashews, macadamia nuts, pumpkin seeds
- Avocado
- Whole eggs
- Full-fat cheese
- Beef: Ground chuck (80/20), filet mignon, porterhouse, ribeye
- Chicken: Thighs and legs
- Vegetables: Spinach and other greens, broccoli, asparagus, cabbage, mushrooms, bell pepper
- Pork rinds
- Olive oil
- Salted butter
- Heavy cream
- Sour cream
- Cream cheese
- Fatty fish: Salmon, mackerel, sardines, anchovies
- Bacon

Foods to Avoid on a Ketogenic Diet

- Grains: Wheat, oats, corn, barley and rye. Includes breads and pastas.
- Artificial Sweeteners: Sucralose, Equal, Acesulfame, Splenda, Saccharin, etc.
- Processed Foods: If it contains carrageenan, don't eat it.
- "Low-fat" products: Atkins products, drinks, gluten, diet soda, etc.

Ketogenic Meal Examples:

Breakfast

Eggs
Provolone cheese
bacon
diced onions
butter

Lunch

Chicken breasts
Olive oil
Salsa
Avocado
Mixed Greens

Dinner

Sea bass
Cauliflower
Zucchini
Walnuts

Recommended Ketogenic Diet Cook Books:

[Ketogenic Cookbook](#)

[The Ultimate Ketogenic Diet Cookbook](#)

3. Slow Carb Diet



The Slow Carb diet is centered around the idea of three simple meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner following 5 golden rules. Simplicity is the key to adherence.

Those rules would be:

Rule #1: Avoid “white” starchy carbohydrates (or those that can be white). This means all bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, and grains. If you have to ask, don't eat it.

Rule #2: Eat the same few meals over and over again, especially for breakfast and lunch. You already do this; you're just picking new default meals.

Rule #3: Don't drink calories.

Rule #4: Don't eat fruit. (Fructose -> glycerol phosphate -> more bodyfat, more or less.) Avocado and tomatoes are excepted.

Rule #5: Take one day off per week and go nuts. I choose and recommend Saturday.

What I like about the slow carb diet is it leaves room for you to be human. What I mean by that is it accounts for cheat days while keeping the rules very simple to adhere to. Pro tip; the diet suggests if you want to lose weight you should eat at least 30 grams of protein within 30 minutes of waking up.

The slow carb diet came from Tim Ferriss's book; The Four Hour Body.

[The 4 Hour Body](#)

Meal ideas that adhere to the slow carb diet:

Breakfast

Breakfast casserole <http://www.findingmyfitness.com/2011/01/slow-carb-breakfast-casserole/>

Omelet, lentils, spinach, and bacon

Egg cupcakes

Lunch

Tuna salad wrap

Meatballs with guacamole

Steak Salad

Dinner

Chicken stir fry with peppers, onions, carrots, and broccoli

Chicken, chickpeas and spinach

Pork Chops and green beans

Supplements and etc.

On top of those three diets I recommended above I've experimented with a whole range of supplements and meal replacement options. I did this to optimize my micronutrient intake and to find hacks to help with my energy levels throughout the day. Below you will find all the products I use on a daily/regular basis.

The Oils

[Coconut Oil](#) is a great addition to many meals in order to add fat to your diet.

[Olive Oil](#) is also another great option to get the macro fat into your meal.

Greens

I don't go a day without drinking my [Greens](#). This isn't necessarily a must for PWN, it's just a dietary supplement that ensures you're getting all your micronutrients.



Protein bars for meal replacement:

[Quest Protein Bars](#)

Quest bars are hands down my favorite protein bars. They're incredibly filling and contain very little sugar, which helps you adhere to the Ketogenic diet. They are my go to snack when I'm in a rush. Couldn't recommend them enough.

Supplements

Cortisol Manager

My naturopathic doctor recommended I take a [Cortisol Manager](#) for the rest of my life due to my sleep cycle being so off tilt. I recommend you do the same. You can click on the blue link above to check out the specific one I use.

Fish Oil

[Fish Oil](#) is another great hack to add healthy fats to your diet. It's also great for brain health.

[Pre Workout Supplement](#)

Even though this supplement has a bit of caffeine I moderate the intake. I do only about 0.5 scoop in the morning to get me going. I found that with this supplement there is very little crash. I wouldn't have made it through some days without this supplement. Couldn't recommend enough.

[Decaf Bullet Proof Coffee](#)

Bulletproof coffee is when you add MCT oil and grass-fed butter to coffee. It is a great way to ensure you get plenty of healthy fats in you. I obviously drink a decaffeinated version of this. Above is a link to the best coffee I've found for it.

I add this MCT oil to the coffee:

[MCT Oil](#)

And you can find grass fed butter at your local grocery store. I highly recommend trying out adding bullet proof coffee to your morning routine. I consume it about 2-4 times a week. I notice that when I do have it I have less cravings as well.

Benefits of meal batching

We all have busy lives yes? And we all are struggling to find energy as it is. So one of the ways I found to combat this is meal batching. Or in other words making multiple meals at the same time for different days of the week.

This way it saves cooking time, saves clean up time, and you can do it when you are feeling the most alert.

Meal Prep



Tupperware to the rescue!

Here are some of my favorite items to use for meal batching:

[Meal Prep Bag with Meal Prep Containers](#)

[Reusable Microwaveable Meal Prep Containers with lids](#)

[6-Quart Crock Pot](#)

Ketosis

The Ketogenic diet was one of the 3 diets I recommended for PWN. This chapter is breaking down the definition of Ketosis and how to track it.

Ketosis can be defined as:

Ketosis is a normal metabolic process. When the body does not have enough glucose for energy, it burns stored fats instead; this results in a build-up of acids called ketones within the body. Some people encourage **ketosis** by following a diet called the **ketogenic** or **low-carb** diet. Mar 21, 2017

Ketosis has certainly had an amazing effect on my EDS and overall energy levels. Ketosis can be measured by using a device like this:

[Nova Max Plus Blood Glucose Monitoring System](#)

Interested in learning more about ketosis?

Feel free to check out these articles:

<https://www.dietdoctor.com/low-carb/ketosis>

<https://rebootedbody.com/ketosis/>

<https://authoritynutrition.com/7-tips-to-get-into-ketosis/>

Intermittent fasting

IF or intermittent fasting is a term for a eating pattern that cycles between periods of fasting and eating.

The most common practice of intermittent fasting is to only eat during an 8 hour window.

So that means for the majority of the day (16 hours) you don't eat.

One of my favorite bloggers, James Clear, wrote a post about it: <http://jamesclear.com/the-beginners-guide-to-intermittent-fasting>

My favorite quote from his post:

What is Intermittent Fasting and Why Would You Do It?

Intermittent fasting is not a diet, it's a pattern of eating. It's a way of scheduling your meals so that you get the most out of them. Intermittent fasting doesn't change *what* you eat, it changes *when* you eat.

Examples of what your day would look like with it:

Wake up
Breakfast at 8-9 am
Snack 1/2 pm
Late Lunch/Early Dinner 4-5 pm
5pm - 8am fast

The exact hours of the day at which you practice are not important. What is important is that your not eating during a 16 hour window of the day.

How I personally practice Intermittent Fasting

Here's my Monday to Friday schedule:

12 pm - 8 pm - good to eat!

8 pm - 11:59 am - no food

I make sure that I'm sleeping during a good chunk of the fasting just to make it easier.

*I do cheat on workout days.

Here's what that looks like:

So I get up at 5 am, down a protein shake, then go directly to the gym.

Immediately after my workout (7 am) I'll have one more protein shake and then head to work. I won't eat any solid food until noon. Then from there the next meal of the day I have is dinner. It fluctuates but I typically eat between 6-7 pm.

Therefore, I don't have any solids in my stomach for 16-17 hours of the day.

On the weekends my schedule is a little more erratic. I found that simply sticking to it during the work week was enough to make a MASSIVE difference. Adhering to Intermittent Fasting 5/7 days a week is still a big enough shift to have profound change.

Since I started practicing IF for the past 2 months I've noticed a noticeable change in my energy levels. I've felt like my EDS is less problematic, I surprisingly did not crave food too much during the morning, and I felt less lethargic throughout the day.

Super worried about cravings? Don't think you could go that long without food?

I got you!

Once you switch to burning dietary fats you'll get over the constant cravings. I know not eating for 16 hours a day may seem horrendous, or even impossible but there is hope. Before switching over to the ketogenic I felt as though I couldn't go more than 3 hours without snacking. That's because I was burning sugar as a fuel source and not dietary fat. It's quite amazing once you make the switch. I only

start to get hungry around 10 am now (14 hours after my last meal). It's like the difference of running on coal instead of throwing cups of gasoline on a fire.

In conclusion

Thank you so much for taking the time to download and read this ebook. I wrote it because like you, I've been lost. I've had this disease knock me on my ass. I've been in a dark place thinking that I can't live with Narcolepsy, or at least live the life I thought I deserved.

After experimenting for the past 3 years with all different types of medicine, lifestyle changes, and diets. I've come to one solid conclusion; change your diet, and you'll change your life.

I'm not saying that by eating whole foods your EDS will float away. However, I am saying that you'll notice the difference and the change will be positive.

From the bottom of my heart I hope that this book provided you value.

I can't stress enough that knowledge is not power. Action is.

Go forth and implement the information in this ebook to take back some control of your life.

You can do this!

Once again my name is Peter, thank you for reading this my sleepy friends.



Peter Conley

Your Narcolepsy Coach

www.narcolepsycoach.com