



### What are Provigil and Nuvigil?

Provigil and Nuvigil are stimulant medications that act in the brain to reduce sleepiness and cost about \$300 a month. The active ingredient in Nuvigil is also in Provigil. These medications are controlled substances because they can be habit forming.

### Why are Provigil and Nuvigil prescribed?

Provigil and Nuvigil are commonly used for the excessive sleepiness associated with narcolepsy, sleep apnea and for patients who have a sleep disorder because they work odd hours.

### How well do Provigil and Nuvigil work?

Patients taking Provigil and Nuvigil generally report a small improvement in alertness and a small decrease in their sense of drowsiness. In patients treated for drowsiness related to narcolepsy, these medications have not been shown to be more effective or safer than other stimulants.

Provigil and Nuvigil do not change the underlying medical problem. They are intended to help people deal with the symptom of sleepiness and are not a substitute for adequate sleep.

### What about Provigil or Nuvigil for sleep apnea?

Sleep apnea should be treated with a CPAP machine (continuous positive air pressure). Treatment with CPAP allows patients to get the quality sleep they need by making sure they can breathe throughout the night. Provigil or Nuvigil are sometimes used for patients that continue to have excessive sleepiness, even with correct use of the CPAP machine.

### Are Provigil or Nuvigil ever prescribed for other conditions?

Yes, but there is little reliable scientific information about the effectiveness or safety of using these medications for depression, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis or Parkinson's disease. The FDA did not approve Provigil for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or for use in children due to concerns about the possibility of severe skin rashes.

### What are my other medication options for narcolepsy?

Below are approximate retail cost estimates based on a 30-day supply. The price you will pay is based on your prescription benefit. Brand names in parentheses are listed for your reference only.

| <b>Generic Medications: ~\$24-44</b>   | <b>Provigil and Nuvigil: ~\$267-389</b> |
|--|---|
| <b>amphetamine salt combo</b> (Adderall <sup>®</sup> )<br><b>dextroamphetamine</b> (Dexedrine <sup>®</sup> )<br><b>methylphenidate</b> (Ritalin <sup>®</sup> ) | Provigil<br>Nuvigil                     |

### Is Provigil or Nuvigil habit forming?

Provigil and Nuvigil are controlled substances that can be associated with addiction or dependency, similar to other stimulant drugs like methylphenidate (Ritalin) or amphetamines. They both produce alterations in mood, perception, thinking and feelings typical of other stimulants like methylphenidate (Ritalin) or amphetamines.

### What are the common side effects with Provigil and Nuvigil?

The most common side effects of Provigil and Nuvigil are similar to other stimulants and include: headache, nausea, nervousness, runny nose, diarrhea, back pain, anxiety, insomnia, dizziness, loss of appetite and upset stomach. They may also cause an increase in blood pressure or a decrease in appetite. Neither Provigil or Nuvigil has not been proven to be safer than methylphenidate (Ritalin) or other stimulants.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

Provigil or Nuvigil may be useful for patients with excessive drowsiness associated with narcolepsy, sleep apnea, or sleep disrupted by odd working hours. **However, there is not enough medical information to determine that Provigil or Nuvigil improve the health of patients suffering from other conditions.**

*Note: Since many medication options are available, our physicians and pharmacists developed this to provide you with information about the available alternatives, as well as potential advantages and/or lack of advantages of the various products. This medication summary was developed based upon an evaluation of information from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), scientific studies, and input from practicing doctors and specialists.*



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