Yawning
Yawning is an arousal reflex thought to be generated in the brainstem reticular formation to counteract brain hypoxia; it may precede vasovagal syncope. Excessive or pathological yawning (chasm) is compulsive, repetitive yawning not triggered by physiological stimuli, such as fatigue or boredom. Known associations of yawning include:

- Encephalitis
- Seizures
- Multiple sclerosis
- Tumors of the 4th ventricle, frontal lobes
- Electroconvulsive therapy
- Postthalamotomy
- Drugs (valproate, imipramine)
- Neuroleptic withdrawal
- Parkinson’s disease, progressive supranuclear palsy, restless legs syndrome, pseudobulbar palsy of motor neurone disease

Although the mechanisms are uncertain, yawning may represent a disturbance of dopaminergic transmission. Levodopa may help.

References


Cross References
Parkinsonism; Sighing

Yo-yo-ing
Yo-yo-ing is a form of dyskinesia experienced by patients with idiopathic Parkinson’s disease who have been treated for several years with levodopa preparations, in which there are sudden and unpredictable swings between hypokinesia/akinesia (“off” state; freezing) and severe hyperkinesia (“on” state), sometimes known as the “on-off phenomenon.” Yo-yo-ing is difficult to treat: approaches include dose fractionation, improved drug absorption, or use of dopaminergic agonists with concurrent reduction in levodopa dosage.

Cross References
Akinesia; Dyskinesia; Hypokinesia