



Doctor Discussion Guide

10 questions to start a discussion about cholesterol with your doctor

1. What do my cholesterol numbers mean?
2. What is my cholesterol goal, and how can I reach it?
3. How do diet & exercise affect my cholesterol levels?
4. How often should I have my levels checked?
5. How does cholesterol contribute to plaque buildup?
What can I do about it?
6. Is a cholesterol-lowering medicine right for me?
7. What should I know about cholesterol-lowering medicines (i.e., side effects)?
8. Should I avoid any foods or other medicines?
9. How long will I need to take my medicine?
10. Is there a patient program that offers financial assistance?

Uses and Important Safety Information You Should Know About NIASPAN® (niacin extended-release tablets)

USES¹

NIASPAN® (niacin extended-release tablets) is a prescription medication used along with diet when a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet and other non-drug measures alone have been unsuccessful.

- NIASPAN raises HDL (“good”) cholesterol and lowers LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and triglycerides in people with abnormal cholesterol levels.
- NIASPAN is also used to reduce the risk of recurrent heart attacks in people with abnormal cholesterol levels.
- NIASPAN can be used in combination with lovastatin or simvastatin to improve abnormal cholesterol levels when taking NIASPAN, simvastatin, or lovastatin alone is not enough.
- In people with coronary artery disease and abnormal cholesterol levels, NIASPAN, in combination with a bile acid binding resin (e.g., colestipol), is used to slow down or reduce atherosclerosis, the hardening of coronary arteries due to plaque buildup.
- No additional benefit of NIASPAN on heart disease has been demonstrated when used with simvastatin or lovastatin over that shown for niacin, simvastatin, or lovastatin alone.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

- NIASPAN is not for people with liver problems, stomach ulcers, serious bleeding problems, or those allergic to any product ingredient.
- Severe liver damage can occur when switching to a long-acting niacin (NIASPAN) from immediate-release niacin. All forms of niacin are not the same as NIASPAN. Do not switch between forms of niacin without talking to your health care provider.
- Tell your health care provider about any unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, as this could be a sign of a serious side effect. This risk may be increased when NIASPAN is taken with lovastatin or simvastatin, particularly in the elderly, diabetics and those with kidney or thyroid problems.
- NIASPAN is associated with increases in liver enzymes. Your health care provider should do blood tests before and during treatment with NIASPAN to check liver enzyme levels. NIASPAN should be used with caution if you consume large amounts of alcohol.

- Tell your health care provider if you have kidney problems, or a history of gout. NIASPAN may cause an increase in uric acid levels.
- NIASPAN may cause an increase in blood sugar levels. If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar levels more frequently during the first few months or with NIASPAN dose changes.
- The most common side effects include flushing, headache, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, increased cough, and itching.
- Flushing (warmth, redness, itching, and/or tingling of the skin) is a common side effect of niacin therapy that may subside after several weeks of consistent NIASPAN use. Flushing may vary in severity and is more likely to occur with initiation of therapy, or during dose increases. By dosing at bedtime, flushing will most likely occur during sleep. However, if awakened by flushing at night, you should get up slowly, especially if feeling dizzy, feeling faint, or taking blood pressure medications.
- If you are taking another cholesterol medication called a bile acid binding resin (e.g., colestipol) along with NIASPAN, take these medicines at least 4 to 6 hours apart.
- Some medicines should not be taken with NIASPAN. Tell your health care provider about all the medicines you take, including aspirin, any cholesterol medication, blood pressure medication, or anticoagulants, also known as blood thinners, or any products containing niacin or nicotinamide.

For more information, talk with your health care provider.

Reference: 1. NIASPAN [package insert]. North Chicago, IL: Abbott Laboratories.

Full Prescribing Information is available at <http://www.rxabbott.com/pdf/niaspan.pdf>.

If you need additional information call 1.888.5NIASPAN or visit www.niaspan.com.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

If you cannot afford your medication, contact: www.pparx.org or call the toll-free phone number (1-888-4PPA-NOW) for assistance.