



Why Your Doctor Wants You on



You may have heard some things in the news recently about NIASPAN. Maybe you are wondering why your doctor prescribed NIASPAN, or why your doctor wants you to keep taking it. Your doctor has given you this information sheet to help explain why you should still be taking NIASPAN.

What NIASPAN Can Do for You¹

Your doctor has prescribed NIASPAN because a low-fat diet and exercise alone are not doing enough to improve your cholesterol levels. Here are some other specific reasons why your doctor has prescribed NIASPAN for you:

Raise “good” cholesterol

NIASPAN, combined with diet and exercise, works to raise good cholesterol (HDL) levels in people with abnormal cholesterol levels. When it comes to HDL, having a higher number is better. NIASPAN also works to lower bad cholesterol and triglycerides.

Reduce the risk of another heart attack

A key ingredient in NIASPAN has been shown to reduce the chance of having another heart attack in patients who have had a heart attack and have high cholesterol.

Slow down or help clear some of the build-up of plaque in your arteries

Plaque buildup is a complex process and has a number of causes that lead up to it, including a family history of early heart disease, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, and abnormal cholesterol levels. Cholesterol and other substances can build up in the walls of the heart’s arteries, resulting in plaque.

If you have coronary artery disease and high cholesterol levels, NIASPAN, along with diet and a bile acid-binding resin (another cholesterol medicine), can help slow down plaque buildup and even help clear some of it away.

NIASPAN, combined with a bile acid-binding resin, has not been shown to prevent heart disease, heart attacks, or stroke.

If you have any questions about NIASPAN and whether it is right for you, talk to your doctors as they can best guide your medical care.

Why You Shouldn’t Substitute Niacin for NIASPAN

NIASPAN has been available by prescription for more than 10 years. Follow your doctor’s instructions and do NOT substitute dietary supplement niacin for prescription extended-release NIASPAN. In fact, The American Heart Association states that “dietary supplement niacin must **not** be used as a substitute for prescription niacin.”²

SAFETY INFORMATION¹

- NIASPAN is not for people with liver problems, stomach ulcers, serious bleeding problems, or those allergic to any product ingredient.
- NIASPAN should be used with caution if you consume large amounts of alcohol and/or have a past history of liver disease.
- Severe liver damage can occur when switching to a long-acting niacin (NIASPAN) from immediate-release niacin. Do not switch between forms of niacin without talking to your health care provider.

Please see full Uses and Important Safety Information on page 2.
Full Prescribing Information is available at rxabbott.com

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION¹ (CON'T)

- 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 a statin, particularly in the elderly, diabetics, and those with kidney or thyroid problems.
- **NIASPAN should be used with caution if you consume large amounts of alcohol and/or have a past history of liver disease.**
- Your health care provider should do blood tests before and during treatment to check liver enzyme levels, as these may increase with treatment.
- 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 with NIASPAN are 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 get better after several weeks of consistent NIASPAN use. It may vary in severity and is more likely to happen when starting NIASPAN or during dose increases. Talk to your doctor about how the symptoms of flushing are different from symptoms of a heart attack. By dosing at bedtime, flushing will likely occur during sleep. If awakened by flushing, get up slowly, especially if feeling dizzy or faint, or taking blood pressure medications.
- If you are taking another cholesterol medication called a bile acid-binding resin (e.g., colestipol, cholestyramine) 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 blood thinner medication, or any products containing niacin or nicotinamide.

USES for NIASPAN[®] (niacin extended-release tablets)¹

NIASPAN is a prescription medication used along with diet when a low-cholesterol diet and exercise alone are not enough.

- NIASPAN raises HDL (“good”) cholesterol and lowers LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and triglycerides in people with abnormal cholesterol levels.
- NIASPAN is also used to lower the risk of heart attack in people who have had a heart attack and have high cholesterol.
- In people with coronary artery disease and high cholesterol levels, NIASPAN, when used with a bile acid-binding resin (another cholesterol medicine), can slow down or lessen the build-up of plaque (fatty deposits) in your arteries.
- 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.
- 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.

For more information, talk with your health care provider.

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 (1-800-332-1088).

If you cannot afford your medication, contact: www.pparx.org or call the toll-free number (1-888-4PPA-NOW [1-888-477-2669]) for assistance.

References: 1. NIASPAN [package insert]. North Chicago, IL: Abbott Laboratories. 2. American Heart Association. Cholesterol-lowering drugs. http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/PreventionTreatmentofHighCholesterol/Drug-Therapy-for-Cholesterol_UCM_305632_Article.jsp. Accessed October 18, 2011.

Full Prescribing Information is available at rxabbott.com

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