

# Niaspan (Niacin) basics

**Lowers cholesterol.** Niaspan (Niacin) lowers triglycerides, but isn't as good as statins for improving cholesterol levels.

## What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.



\* Placebo is a sugar pill with no medicinal benefit.

† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

## Tips from pharmacists

- Take Niaspan (Niacin) at bedtime with a low-fat snack.
- Don't have alcohol, spicy foods, or hot beverages right before you take this medicine.
- Can cause make your skin feel hot and change color. Your doctor may tell you to take an aspirin 30 minutes before you take Niaspan (Niacin) to reduce the flushing.
- Call your doctor if you feel unexplained muscle pain.
- Niaspan (Niacin) works differently from other medicines you can buy over-the-counter. Don't switch it with other medicines unless your doctor agrees.

## Risks and warnings

Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

### Muscle pain

People taking Niaspan (Niacin) who are also using a statin medicine have reported muscle pain. This is very rare, but can lead to muscle and kidney damage. Talk to your doctor if you develop sudden unexplained muscle pain, weakness, or fever.

### Liver damage

People who use Niaspan (Niacin) have reported liver damage, especially when taken with statins or if you drink large amounts of alcohol. This is rare, but talk to your doctor if you're worried about liver damage. You can start a different medicine or have regular blood tests.

### High blood sugar

People with diabetes may have higher blood sugar levels while taking Niaspan (Niacin), especially during the first few months of taking this medication. Your doctor will work closely with you to see if changes to your diabetes medications are needed.