



# CORNERSTONE MEDICAL CLINIC

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## **Information for Patients Starting Niacin**

You will be starting on the drug, Niacin. This is B vitamin that has been found to lower cholesterol and triglycerides when given in high doses. This medication has some side effects that are troubling to patients. But, when taken according to the following instructions these side effects are minimized.

The most common complaints are hot flashes, sweating, flushing of the skin and mild itching associated with the flushing. These reactions usually occur shortly after taking the medication and often tends to resolve or become less troublesome after taking the medication for three to four weeks. These side effects can usually be controlled by gradually increasing the dose of Niacin. Also, by taking a single aspirin tablet 30 to 60 minutes prior to the dose of Niacin most, if not all, of these uncomfortable reactions can be prevented.

Niacin can be purchased over-the-counter without a prescription. You should initially purchase 50-60 tablets of Niacin, 250 mg. size. If you are able to tolerate this medication as you increase dosage, then you will subsequently want to purchase 500 mg Niacin tablets for your long term treatment of high cholesterol. Please ask your druggist for the generic form of this medication which is considerably less expensive than the trade-named drug, Nicobid.

### The instructions are as follows:

1. Begin taking one (1) Niacin 250 mg. tablet twice a day for seven (7) days.
2. Increase to two (2) Niacin 250 mg. tablets twice a day for seven (7) days.
3. Increase to two (2) Niacin 500 mg. tablets twice a day.

After approximately two months on this medication, your blood cholesterol levels will be reassessed and adjustments made in your dosage levels. If you have any questions regarding this medication or these directions, please feel free to contact your physician at Cornerstone Medical Clinic.