Niacin Therapy January 2010

Purchase the niacin brand "Slo-Niacin 500 mg" only. Other brands of 'time-release' niacin can damage your liver. It can be found on Amazon.com.



Start by taking one pill at bedtime with a large glass of water.

The major side-effect of taking niacin is flushing, burning, and tingling of the skin which usually starts around the neck and shoulders and can then spread up and down your body. It typically lasts about 10 to 30 minutes but the severity and frequency of these symptoms is extremely variable. Some people have very few of these episodes which may be very mild, others have much worse symptoms. These may appear to be an allergic reaction but they are not.

Things that you can do to reduce these symptoms:

- 1) Take an Aspirin 325 mg (adult size) 30 minutes before the niacin
- 2) Eat a protein snack like cottage cheese with the niacin
- 3) Some people believe that applesauce may be particularly helpful
- 4) Take a Benadryl 25 mg when the flush starts it does not help if you take it with the niacin
- 5) Start with a low dose of Slo-Niacin (500 mg) and increase it every 2-3 weeks
- 6) Sometimes the flushing improves as you increase the dose
- 7) Do not miss a dose because the flushing will be worse the next night
- 8) If you do miss a dose, restart with just 500 mg and titrate back up over 3-7 days

Increase the dose by one pill (500 mg) every two to three weeks until you reach your target dose (usually four pills or 2,000 mg). All the pills can be taken at bedtime or you can spread them out over the day if this works better for you. The full effect that the niacin will have on your cholesterol can take up to 9 months.