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NIACIN - ORAL

OTHER NAMES: Vitamin B-3, Nicotinic Acid

USES: Niacin (Nicotinic acid) is a vitamin involved in fat metabolism, tissue respiration and energy production for the body. Niacin supplements are used to treat and prevent niacin deficiency. It is also used to lower cholesterol and fat levels in the blood.

HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICATION: Take this medication as directed. Follow any special dietary recommendations made by your doctor or nutritionist while taking this medication. Take this medication with food to prevent stomach upset. Timed-release capsules or tablets must be swallowed whole. Do not crush or chew them or the long action may be destroyed and side effects increased.

SIDE EFFECTS: This medication may cause flushing and a feeling of warmth about the face and neck within the first two hours of taking a dose. Itching, tingling, or headache may occur as well. These effects should subside as your body adjusts to the medication. Stomach upset, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. Consult your doctor if any of the effects persist or become severe.

This medication may cause dizziness especially during the first few days of therapy. Avoid sudden changes in posture and use caution engaging in activities requiring alertness.

PRECAUTIONS: This medication must be used with caution in pregnant or nursing women.

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to aspirin or tartrazine (a yellow dye in some processed foods and medications, including niacin).

Tell your doctor if you have diabetes, heart disease, gallbladder disease, gout, ulcers, allergies, or liver disease.

DRUG INTERACTIONS: Tell your doctor of any over-the-counter or prescription drugs you are taking especially medication to treat high blood pressure, diabetes, or other medication to lower cholesterol.

If you take insulin or oral diabetes medication, your dose may need to be altered due to increased blood sugar levels caused by niacin. Ask your doctor.

NOTES: Niacin is common in foods such as beans, milk products, eggs, chicken and steak. Eat more of these foods to increase the amount of niacin in your diet.

There are many niacin products available. Some can be purchased without a prescription. Consult your doctor or pharmacist on the choice of a product best for you.

Do not allow anyone else to take this medication.

The flushing caused by niacin can be decreased by taking one 325 milligram aspirin tablet 30 to 60 minutes before niacin.

MISSED DOSE: If you miss a dose, take as soon as remembered; do not take if it is almost time for the next dose, instead, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not "double-up" the dose to catch up.

STORAGE: Store at room temperature between 59 and 86 degrees F (between 15 and 30 degrees C) away from moisture and sunlight. Do not store in the bathroom. Do not freeze liquid forms of this medication.