



Niacinamide to decrease your risk of skin cancer

What is Niacinamide?

- Niacinamide is the active form of vitamin B3
- Other names for niacinamide include nicotinamide and nicotinic acid amide.
- Natural sources of small quantities of niacinamide include: yeast, lean meats, fish, nuts, and legumes. It is also available in some multivitamins and as a supplement in 500mg tablets.

How does Niacinamide work?

- Niacinamide has been shown to decrease the number of new basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas by 23% at one year of treatment with 500mg two times a day.
- The number of actinic keratoses, sometimes referred to as “pre-cancers” has also been shown to be reduced in patients taking niacinamide.
- Niacinamide is thought to work by boosting the immune response to skin cancers and enhancing cellular repair mechanisms.
- The recommended dose for niacinamide for this indication is one 500mg tablet by mouth two times a day.

What are the side effects from Niacinamide?

- A large study of niacinamide did not show any difference in side effects between niacinamide and placebo.
- There have been reports that it may rarely increase sweating, raise blood sugar, or cause hypotension (low blood pressure).
- Niacinamide does NOT cause flushing or gastrointestinal upset which may occur when taking oral niacin.

Where can I get Niacinamide?

- Niacinamide 500mg tablets are available over the counter (without a prescription).
- Niacinamide may be purchased at most pharmacies, supermarkets, and online retailers.

What if I have questions?

- During regular office hours, please call us at 215 999-DERM (3376).
- For urgent matters during evenings, weekends, or other times that the office is not open, please call Dr. Perlis on his mobile phone.
- For non-urgent matters, you may also reach us by e-mail at nurse@keyderm.com

References:

- Chen et al. A phase 3 randomized trial of nicotinamide for skin cancer chemoprevention. *N Engl J Med* 373; 17. Oct 22, 2015.
- Surjana et al. Oral nicotinamide reduces actinic keratoses in phase II double-blinded randomized controlled trials. *J Invest Dermatol* 2012; 132: 1497-500.