



FOLIC ACID FACTS

- What is Folic Acid?
Folic acid is a B vitamin that can help prevent birth defects of the brain and spinal cord called neural tube defects. Folic acid is also known as folate or folacin.
- Who should have it?
Everyone needs folic acid, but it's especially important for women of childbearing age.
- Folic acid works to prevent birth defects only in early stages of pregnancy and before pregnancy.
- The March of Dimes and RDA's recommend women who can become pregnant take a multi-vitamin that contains 400 micrograms of folic acid every day and eat a healthy diet.
- Did you know that most women get less than half of the recommended amounts of folic acid every day?
- Folate is the natural form of folic acid that is found in foods.
- Folic acid has been shown to prevent heart disease, stroke, and some forms of cancer.
- Besides preventing birth defects in pregnant women, folic acid aids in production of extra blood cells, supporting the growth of fetus and placenta, and in the production of DNA.
- Once a woman gets pregnant how much does she need? Pregnant and lactating women need 600 micrograms a day of folic acid. Taking a prenatal vitamin and eating a balanced diet will help you achieve this recommendation.

Excellent Food Sources of Folate & Folic Acid

- Dark, leafy green vegetables
 - spinach
 - collard greens
 - broccoli
 - cabbage
 - Romaine lettuce
 - asparagus
 - green vegetables
- Cauliflower
- Instant oatmeal
- Multi-vitamin
- Strawberries
- Oranges
- Orange juice
- Citrus fruits and their juice
- Dried peas
- Dried beans
- Enriched cereals
- Peanuts
- Kidney beans
- Whole grain breads and pastas
- Navy beans
- Avocado

Source: March of Dimes Association and American Dietetic Association

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