

# Folic Acid - It's Never Too Early



## *Why are we concerned about women taking folic acid?*

Folic acid is a B vitamin. If a woman has enough folic acid in her body before and during pregnancy, it can help prevent major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine.

## *Who should take folic acid?*

Everyone needs folic acid in their diet. It is especially important for women between the ages of 15 and 45 years and for women who are thinking about becoming pregnant.

## *How much folic acid do I need?*

Women need 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day. Talk to your doctor if you have a history of neural tube defects in other pregnancies because you may need a higher dose.

## *Where can I get folic acid?*

It is hard to get all the folic acid in your average diet so we recommend you take a multivitamin that contains folic acid. These are usually labeled as "prenatal vitamins."

Folic acid is **FREE** for all women enrolled in the health department's WIC, Family Planning, and Prenatal Care programs. Call your local health department for more information.

*For more information:* [www.cdc.gov/folicacid](http://www.cdc.gov/folicacid)



12/12



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