

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOPIC: Folic Acid

TAKE FOLIC ACID TO IMPROVE YOUR ODDS OF HAVING A HEALTHY BABY

The CDC urges women to take 400 mcg of folic acid every day, starting at least one month before getting pregnant, to help prevent major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine.

About Folic Acid

Folic acid is a B vitamin. Our bodies use it to make new cells. Everyone needs folic acid.

Why Folic Acid is so Important

Folic acid is very important because it can help prevent some major defects such as spina bifida and anencephaly.

How Much Folic Acid a Woman Needs

400 micrograms (mcg) every day

When to Start Taking Folic Acid

For folic acid to help prevent some major birth defects, a woman needs to start taking it at least one month before she becomes pregnant and while she is pregnant.

Every woman needs folic acid every day, whether she's planning to get pregnant or not, for the healthy new cells the body makes daily. Think about the skin, hair, and nails. These – and other parts of the body – make new cells each day.

How a Woman Can Get Enough Folic Acid

There are two easy ways to be sure to get enough folic acid each day:

- Take a vitamin that has folic acid in it every day.
- Most multivitamins sold in the United States have the amount of folic acid women need each day. Women can also choose to take a small pill (supplement) that has only folic acid in it each day.
- Multivitamins and folic acid pills can be found at most local pharmacy, grocery, or discount stores. Check the label to be sure it contains 100% of the daily value (DV) of folic acid, which is 400 micrograms (mcg).
- Eat a bowl of breakfast that has 100% of the daily recommendation of folic acid every day.

- Not every cereal has this amount. Check the label on the side of the box, and look for one that has “100%” next to folic acid

On a separate note, it is important to point out that Kentucky is one of the unhealthiest states in our nation; but, a few healthy lifestyle choices could change this. First, eating normally proportioned helpings of nutritious foods including at least five fruits and vegetables a day can lower weight and reduce heart disease and diabetes. Second, exercising about 30 minutes per day can lower blood pressure. Third, avoiding the use of tobacco products can reduce several types of cancer. Finally, making sure you get your needed preventive screenings can detect diseases early and greatly increase your chances for a positive health outcomes, while receiving your recommended vaccinations can prevent acquiring disease in the first place. Visit our website at www.LCDHD.org and click the “52 Weeks to Health” banner to learn more about each of these areas.

Source: Centers for Disease Control (CDC)