

# Folic Acid Now

"B" Smart Today for Someday

400 mcg

## Why Do You Need Folic Acid?



Folic acid, also called folate, is one of the B vitamins. In addition to helping produce red blood cells and DNA, folic acid is one of the few nutrients known to prevent certain kinds of birth defects called neural tube defects (NTDs), such as spina bifida.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that women who take 400 micrograms of folic acid every day prior to and during early pregnancy reduce their baby's risk of NTDs by up to 70 percent.

## Can you "B" Smart?

Circle the correct response.

1. If women of childbearing age consume \_\_\_\_\_, they may reduce the risk of having a baby with birth defects of the brain and spinal cord.
  - a. Foods high in calcium and protein
  - b. Low-fat foods
  - c. 400 micrograms of folic acid daily
  - d. 60 milligrams of vitamin C daily
2. Folic acid may reduce a woman's risk of having a baby with birth defects of the brain and spinal cord if it is consumed \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Before pregnancy
  - b. In early pregnancy
  - c. Before and in early pregnancy
  - d. After pregnancy
3. Folic acid is a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. B vitamin
  - b. C vitamin
  - c. Mineral
  - d. Prescribed drug



## How to Get Your Folic Acid

Take a multivitamin with 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid or take a single pill of 400 mcg of folic acid every day.

**OR**

Eat a bowl of a breakfast cereal containing 100 percent of the daily value of folic acid per serving. Total<sup>®</sup>, Smart Start<sup>®</sup> and Multigrain Cheerios<sup>®</sup> are some examples.



**AND**

Choose a healthy diet that contains lots of fruits and vegetables, and foods fortified with folic acid.



Foods High in Folic Acid	Micrograms
Breakfast cereals fortified with 100 percent of the DV, ¾ cup	400
Breakfast cereals, fortified with 25 percent of the DV	100
Great Northern beans, boiled, ½ cup	90
Asparagus, boiled, four spears	85
Rice - white, long grains, parboiled, enriched, cooked, ½ cup	65
Vegetarian baked beans, canned, 1 cup	60
Spinach, raw, 1 cup	60
Green peas, frozen, boiled, ½ cup	50
Broccoli, chopped, frozen, cooked, 1.2 cups	50
Egg noodles, cooked, enriched, ½ cup	50
Broccoli, raw, two spears (each 5 inches long)	45
Peanuts, all types, dry roasted, 1 ounce	40
Lettuce, romaine, shredded, ½ cup	40
Bread, white, enriched, one slice	35
Tomato juice, canned, 6 ounces	35
Orange juice, chilled, includes concentrate, ¾ cup	35
Orange, all commercial varieties, fresh, one small	30
Egg, whole, one large	25
Cantaloupe, raw, ¼ medium	25
Banana, raw, one medium	20
Bread, whole wheat, one slice	20

### Folic Acid On the Web

NDSU Extension Service  
[www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/health.htm](http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/health.htm)

Centers for Disease Control  
[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/)

March of Dimes, 1-888-MODIMES  
[www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com)

Spina Bifida Association of America  
[www.sbaa.org](http://www.sbaa.org)

FDA Folic Acid Fact Sheets  
<http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fdafolic.html>

