



## What is It?

OK, so you'll think about taking folic acid, but what is it exactly?

Folic acid is a human-made form of the B vitamin folate, and is necessary for making new, healthy cells in the body.

## Everyone Needs It

Recent studies have shown that folic acid may reduce the risk of cardiac disease and certain types of cancers. Some studies suggest it also might help lower the risk of getting Alzheimer's disease.



## Helpful Info for Everyone

Making a small decision to take folic acid can greatly impact you, any children you might have and your future. For more information, visit:

[www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov)

[www.MarchofDimes.com](http://www.MarchofDimes.com)

[www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

[www.ag.ndsu.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food)

**Julie Garden-Robinson**, food and nutrition specialist, and students from English 275, Introduction to Writing Studies (2007):

Katie Moen

Abi Gaugert

Patricia Jacobsen

Ryan Kahly

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. North Dakota State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, physical and mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to: Vice Provost for Faculty and Equity and Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, 701-231-7708. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881.

4M-2-07

Can we talk?



... about folic acid ...

**NDSU** EXTENSION SERVICE

Reviewed August 2016

# Unplanned!

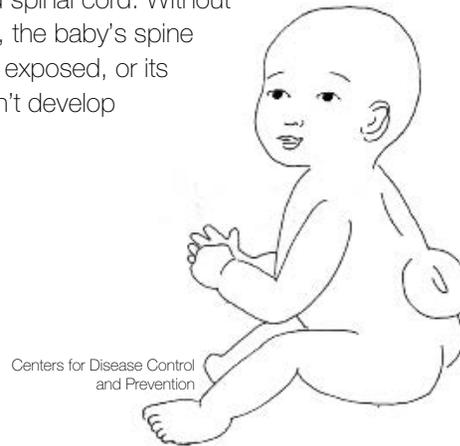
Half of all pregnancies in women from age 18 to 24 are unplanned. That's a lot.

What if you get pregnant? You want your baby to be as healthy as possible.

You've probably heard about this vitamin called folic acid, and it can make a big difference. Here's why:

## 1 in 1,000

About one in 1,000 babies in the U.S. will suffer from a neural tube defect. These are birth defects that affect the structure that will become the baby's brain and spinal cord. Without folic acid, the baby's spine could be exposed, or its brain won't develop properly.



## Fight Defects!

Since birth defects develop early in pregnancy, starting to take folic acid now is important. This can prevent up to 70 percent of neural tube defects. Folic acid also might prevent other types of birth defects of the limbs, heart and face.

## 400 Micrograms

That's where you come in. You probably are not planning on becoming pregnant. You're in school and working hard. That's not for you right now. Getting 400 micrograms of folic acid every day (and you have lots of ways to get it) is a decision that will impact your future, both planned and unplanned, by ensuring the health of your baby some day.

## Take Action

You can get folic acid a lot of different ways. Check nutrition labels (such as the one below) to see how much folic acid is in the foods you eat. Many cereals are enriched with folic acid, so one bowl meets the recommended daily amount. And you are able to get it from more than just cereal. Certain foods, such as cooked dry edible beans, rice, broccoli, kiwi, strawberries and orange juice, all contain folate.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (29g)	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b>	130
Calories from Fat	10
% Daily Value	
<b>Total Fat</b> 1g	<b>2%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	<b>0%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 200mg	<b>8%</b>
<b>Potassium</b> 85mg	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 23g	<b>8%</b>
Dietary Fiber 3g	<b>10%</b>
Sugars 6g	
Other Carbohydrates 14g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A	<b>10%</b>
Vitamin C	<b>25%</b>
Calcium	<b>10%</b>
Iron	<b>100%</b>
Vitamin D	<b>10%</b>
Vitamin E	<b>100%</b>
Thiamin	<b>100%</b>
Riboflavin	<b>100%</b>
Niacin	<b>100%</b>
Vitamin B <sub>6</sub>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Folic Acid</b>	<b>100%</b>
Vitamin B <sub>12</sub>	<b>100%</b>
Pantothenic Acid	<b>100%</b>
Phosphorus	<b>8%</b>
Magnesium	<b>6%</b>
Zinc	<b>100%</b>
Copper	<b>2%</b>

## Take Folic Acid

"I don't like any of those foods, and I don't have time to check nutrition labels."

That's OK. Getting folic acid other ways is easy. One very simple and effective way to add folic acid to your diet is to make sure your multivitamin has enough folic acid, 400 micrograms,