



Folate

For a Healthy You, For a Healthy Baby

**Are you planning to have a baby?
Do you think you will ever have a baby?
You need to know about the vitamin folate.**

**Even if you are not planning to have a baby, YOU STILL NEED TO
KNOW about Folate.**

- **What Is Folate?**

Folate is a B vitamin. It is also called folic acid or folacin. Folate helps your body form red blood cells. It also helps a baby's spine and brain develop before it is born.

- **Why Is Folate Important?**

You need folate in your body **BEFORE YOU GET PREGNANT** and especially in the first months of pregnancy. This greatly reduces your chance of having a baby with a birth defect of the brain or spine. Folate also reduces your risk of developing heart disease, and possibly certain forms of cancer.

- **How Do You Get Folate?**

Eat folate-rich foods and take a multivitamin daily.

Choose a variety of foods including plenty of whole grains and cereals, and at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Heat reduces the amount of folate in foods so avoid overcooking. Fresh is best!

Because it is so difficult to consume enough of the folate-rich foods every day, you should also take a daily multivitamin that contains folate. Take the

recommended amount only. As with any vitamin, it is not good to take too much. The recommended amount of folate in a vitamin is 400 micrograms (mcg).

- **Who Needs Folate?**

Both men and women need folate. However, folate is most important for women who are planning to have a baby, or think they may ever have a baby.

Your body needs folate before you become pregnant. A baby's spine and brain develop in the first weeks of pregnancy, before most women know they are pregnant.

- **How Much?**

Women need at least 400 micrograms of folate every day. If you are pregnant, or if you've had a baby with a birth defect, ask your doctor about the right amount of folate for you.

Eat Foods Rich In Folate

Rich Sources: (more than 80 mcg per serving)

Asparagus	Liver
Breakfast cereals	Mustard greens
Brewers yeast	Orange juice
Garbanzos	Spinach
Dried beans	Strawberries
Lentils	Sunflower seeds

Good Sources: (40 to 80 mcg per serving)

Artichoke	Okra
Avocado	Orange
Beets	Papaya
Broccoli	Peanuts

Brussel sprouts

Raspberries

Canataloupe

Salad greens

Cauliflower

Split peas

Corn

Wheat germ

Green peas

And Take a Multivitamin With Folate

Check the label to see that it contains at least 400 micrograms of folate, folic acid, or folacin. The label may say 0.4 milligrams (mg) of folate. This is the same as 400 micrograms (mcg).

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