



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

February 18, 2009

TO: CONTRACTORS AND COLLEAGUES OF THE MATERNAL,
CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH (MCAH) DIVISION

SUBJECT: FOLIC ACID AND THE PREVENTION OF NEURAL TUBE
DEFECTS

It is with great pleasure that I announce the revision and printing of the English and Spanish pamphlets and posters entitled **Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day**. The basic messaging has remained the same: 1) raise awareness about the role of folic acid in preventing birth defects and 2) provide information on how to consume adequate folic acid. Some edits have occurred in response to field-testing and feedback from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) partners. The drawings have been converted to photographs and the wording on the back panel has been simplified. In addition to the existing pictures, photos of infants with neural tube defects have been added.

To view these materials and read more on folic acid, please go to:
<http://cdph.ca.gov/FolicAcid>.

Background: Findings from the California Women's Health Survey indicate that folic acid supplement use is decreasing among California Latina women who are at increased risk for neural tube birth defects (NTDs). Studies have shown that up to 70% of all NTDs can be prevented when women capable of becoming pregnant consume 400 mcg of folic acid prior to conception. All California women of reproductive age should take a supplement with 400mcg of folic acid daily or consume a breakfast cereal fortified with 100% of the recommended daily value of folic acid to prevent serious birth defects. For a list of cereals with 400mcg of folic acid, go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/cereals.htm> .

The messages in the pamphlets and posters are for all women of reproductive age, but they especially target Latina women. The pamphlets and posters recommend taking a supplement with 400mcg of folic acid daily or consuming a breakfast cereal fortified with

100% of the recommended daily value of folic acid (400mcg) to prevent serious birth defects.

These culturally sensitive pamphlets and posters are part of a multi-level campaign developed in response to recommendations made by a group of stakeholders convened by MCAH to address the decreasing folic acid intake among California Latinas. The campaign also includes radio media spots in the Central Valley and Los Angeles areas that will be aired in February and March 2009. In these same areas and during the same time period, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Family Planning clinics are providing their clients with folic acid counseling and free bottles of multivitamins that contain 400mcg of folic acid. MCAH is collaborating with Medi-Cal to inform providers about the folic acid supplement benefits under Medi-Cal, which are available to women of childbearing age without the requirement of a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR). Finally, a curriculum on folic acid has been written for "promotores de salud": outreach workers who are responsible for raising awareness about health and educational issues in the Latino community. The curriculum is currently being piloted in the Central Valley.

Action: The ordering procedure varies by agency. 1) If you are with a WIC program, please order these new brochures and posters as you would normally order materials through WIC. 2) If you are with a local agency that is **outside** of the local health department, please order the materials from your local March of Dimes offices (See Attachment A). 3) If you are with a local health department (non-WIC), please order through the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Warehouse (See Attachment B).

The materials available are:

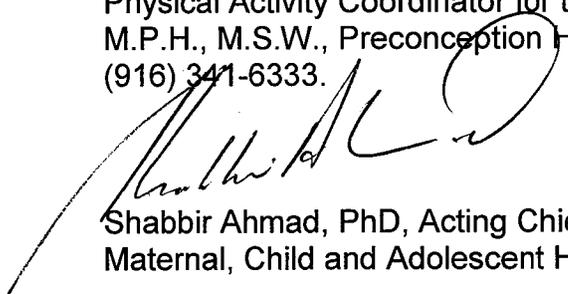
Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day pamphlets (English): Publication (Pub) Number 410.

Acido Fólico: Cada Mujer, Cada Día pamphlets (Spanish): Pub Number 411.

Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day 11" X 17" posters (English): Pub Number 412.

Acido Fólico: Cada Mujer, Cada Día 11" X 17" posters (Spanish): Pub Number 413.

Should you have questions, please contact Suzanne Haydu, M.P.H., R.D., Nutrition and Physical Activity Coordinator for the MCAH Division at (916) 650-0382 or Kiko Malin, M.P.H., M.S.W., Preconception Health Coordinator for the MCAH Division at (916) 341-6333.



Shabbir Ahmad, PhD, Acting Chief
Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division

Attachment A

March of Dimes Offices

<p><u>March of Dimes Bay Area Division</u> 1050 Sansome Street, 4th Floor San Francisco, CA 94111 (415) 217-6380</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Central Valley Division</u> 4201 W. Shaw Avenue, Suite 105 Fresno, CA 93722 (559) 244-5777</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Greater Los Angeles Division</u> 3699 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 520 Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 637-5037</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Imperial Office</u> 395 Broadway St., Suite 3 El Centro, CA 92243 (760) 312-5751</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Inland Empire Division</u> 3600 Lime Street, #521 Riverside, CA 92501 (951) 341-0903 ext. 25</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Orange County Division</u> 2222 Martin Street, Ste. 155 Irvine, CA 92612 (949) 263-1100</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes San Diego – Imperial Division</u> 9325 Sky Park Court, #250 San Diego, CA 92123 (858) 576-1211 ext. 217</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes South Bay Division</u> 101 S. Winchester Blvd., Ste E-155 San Jose, CA 95128 (408) 260-7629</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Valley Division</u> 1729 Tully Rd., Suite 6 Modesto, CA 95350 (209) 522-5626</p>
<p><u>March of Dimes Greater Capital Division</u> 1755 Creekside Oaks Drive, Suite 130 Sacramento, CA 95833 (916) 922-1913</p>

Attachment B

Folic Acid Pamphlet and Poster Ordering Directions for Local Health Jurisdictions

Obtain Warehouse Order Form DHCS 2031

If you do not have one of these forms with a control number specified for your organization, send a fax on your letterhead stationery to Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Warehouse (916) 928-1326. Your note should read, "Please fax a form DHCS 2031 to _____ (fill in your fax number)."

Order one pad (25) of form 2031 for future orders, when you submit your folic acid materials order. For Warehouse-related questions, contact the Warehouse at (916) 928-9203.

Complete Order Form 2031

Directions will be faxed to you along with the order form. Use the county code listed in these directions:

- You can order Form DHCS 2031 by the pad. Each pad has 25, so use the quantity "25" for one pad.
- When ordering **Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day** pamphlets (English) use Publication (Pub) Number 410. Each packet has 100, so use the quantity "100", "200", etc.
- When ordering **Acido Fólico: Cada Mujer, Cada Día** pamphlets (Spanish) use Pub Number 411. Each packet has 100, so use the quantity "100", "200", etc.
- When ordering **Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day** 11" X 17" posters (English) use Pub Number 412.
- When ordering **Acido Fólico: Cada Mujer, Cada Día** 11" X 17" posters (Spanish) use Pub Number 413.

Additional Information or Assistance

Should you have questions, please contact Suzanne Haydu, M.P.H., R.D., Nutrition and Physical Activity Coordinator for the MCAH Division at (916) 650-0382 or Kiko Malin, M.P.H., M.S.W., Preconception Health Coordinator for the MCAH Division at (916) 341-6333.