# Folic Acid

**Folic acid is a B-vitamin your body needs every day. And, if you get pregnant, it lowers your chances of having a baby with birth defects.**

**How can I get enough folic acid every day?**

There are two ways to get the 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid your body needs every day:

* Eat one serving of a cereal that has all the folic acid you need every day. Many cereals do not have enough folic acid, so it is important to read the nutrition label on the box.

or

* Take a vitamin pill that has all of the folic acid you need every day.

**How can I find the amount of folic acid on a label?**

1. Find the nutrition label on the side of a cereal box or vitamin bottle.
2. Look for the words “folic acid” or “folate” in the left column.
3. Look for number “100%” in the right column. It is important that the number say “100%” of your “daily value” for “folic acid” or “folate”.

**Nutrition Facts**

Serving Size: 1 cup (55g)

Servings Per Container About 12

| Amount Per Serving | Name of Cereal | With ½ Cup Skim Milk |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | % Daily Values | % Daily Values |
| Calories | 170 | 210 |
| Calories from Fat | 10 | 10 |
| Total Fat 1g | 1% | 2% |
| Saturated Fat 0g | 0% | 0% |
| Polyunsaturated Fat 0g |  |  |
| Monounsaturated Fat 0g |  |  |
| Cholesterol 0 mg | 0% | 1% |
| Sodium 240mg | 10% | 13% |
| Potassium 360mg | 10% | 16% |
| Total Carbohydrate 41g | 14% | 16% |
| Dietary Fiber 5g | 20% | 20% |
| Sugar 20g |  |  |
| Other Carbohydrate 16g |  |  |
| Protein 4g |  |  |
| Vitamin A | 10% | 15% |
| Vitamin C | 0% | 0% |
| Calcium | 100% | 110% |
| Iron | 100% | 100% |
| Vitamin D | 10% | 25% |
| Vitamin E | 100% | 100% |
| Thiamin | 100% | 100% |
| Riboflavin | 100% | 110% |
| Niacin | 100% | 100% |
| Vitamin B6 | 100% | 100% |
| **Folic Acid** | **100%** | **100%** |
| Pantothenic Acid | 100% | 110% |
| Phosphorus | 100% | 110% |
| Magnesium | 10% | 10% |
| Zinc | 100% | 100% |
| Copper | 8% | 8% |

**Folic Acid: Every Woman, Every Day**

**When is folic acid important for me?**

* Folic acid is good for all women, even if they don’t plan on getting pregnant. It is especially important to have enough folic acid in your body before you get pregnant and during the first months of pregnancy.

**What kind of birth defects may folic acid prevent?**

* Taking folic acid before you get pregnant lowers your chances of having a baby with serious birth defects of the brain or spinal cord. It may also lower your chances of having a baby with birth defects of the heart, lip or mouth.

**What are the other benefits of folic acid?**

* You need folic acid for the growth and repair of every cell in your body. Since hair, skin, and nails grow every day, folic acid is really important.