

Questions About Folate

What is Folate?

Folate is a "B" vitamin your body needs every day to be healthy. Folate is also called folic acid.

Why Do I Need it?

It helps your baby's cells grow and divide the right way during pregnancy. This lowers your chances of having a baby with birth defects of the brain or spinal cord.

When Do I Need Folate?

It's especially important to have folate in your body before you get pregnant and during the first months of pregnancy.

How Can I Get Enough Folate?

Eat a variety of the foods listed in this pamphlet. You need 400 mcg of folate daily. If you eat one cup of beans, one cup of orange juice, and 3/4 cup of broccoli, you can meet your folate needs for one day.

Not everyone eats enough folate everyday. We recommend that you also take a vitamin pill that contains 400 mcg folic acid daily. Talk with your doctor about this.

Before and During Pregnancy You Need Folate



Cooperative effort of:
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To Have a Healthy Baby Eat Foods High in Folate or Folic Acid

Folate Prevents Some Birth Defects

Folate is a vitamin that lowers your chances of having a baby with birth defects. It helps the baby's spine and brain grow. A woman needs folate in her body even before she gets pregnant.

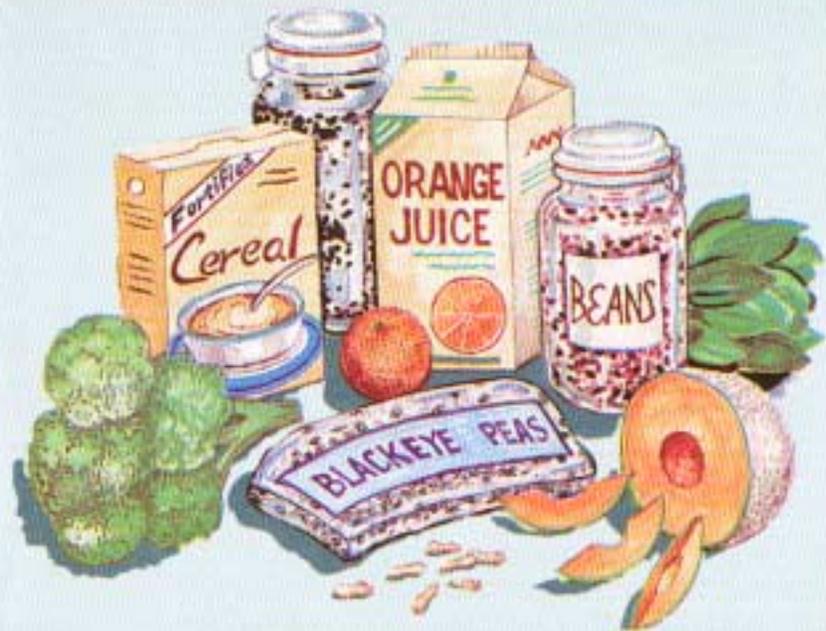
Choose Foods Fortified with Folic Acid

Buy foods that have folic acid or folate on the nutrition label.

- ❖ Folic acid may be added to cereal, bread, rice, flour, grits, corn meal, farina, and pasta.
- ❖ Cereals high in folic acid are Total Corn Flakes®, Whole Wheat Total®, Total Raisin Bran®, and Product 19®.

Beans are High in Folate

- ❖ Eat beans several times a week.
- ❖ Beans and lentils are the best vegetable source of folate.
- ❖ Use beans in salads and soups or as a main dish.



Some Nuts also Have Folate

- ❖ Snack on a handful of peanuts, sunflower seeds, walnuts, or almonds.

Many Fruits and Vegetables Have Folate

Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

- ❖ Drink orange juice. Enjoy oranges, pineapple, cantaloupe, bananas and avocados.
- ❖ Eat vegetables such as broccoli, asparagus, spinach, dark green lettuce, and okra. You can eat them raw, steamed, or microwaved. Be careful not to overcook.