

Food Sources of Folic Acid

Orange juice
Fortified cereals
Lentils
Peas
Melon
Broccoli
Spinach
Asparagus



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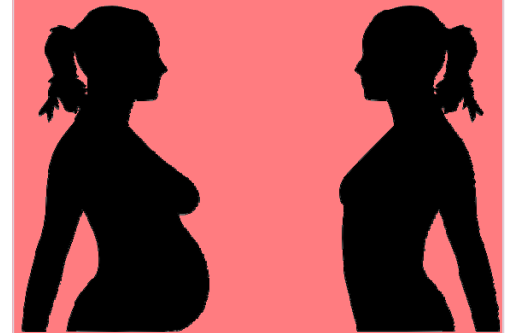


Lexington, CCHC

Folic Acid

Health information

Important for you
now and important
for your future



Folic Acid: important for you now and for your future

Folic Acid is a B vitamin that has many health benefits. Taking folic acid reduces the risk of premature birth and birth defects of the brain and spine called neural tube defects.

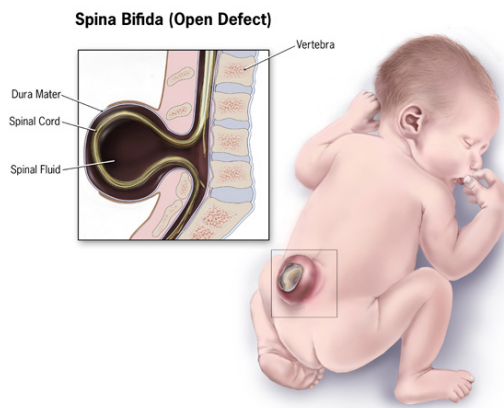


Diagram depicting spinal bulge

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/spinabifida/facts.html>

A neural tube is the beginning of a baby's brain and spinal cord. If the neural tube does not develop properly, conditions like spina bifida, anencephaly, and cleft lip and cleft palate can result.

Spina bifida: spinal column does not close to protect spinal cord

Anencephaly: absence of a large part of the brain and skull

Cleft lip and palate: incomplete closing of lip and roof of mouth

How much Folic Acid do you need?

Women should take a multivitamin containing 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily.



When a woman becomes pregnant, she should take a prenatal vitamin containing 600 micrograms of folic acid.

Other Benefits of Folic Acid

Folic acid is not just important during pregnancy. It is important for your overall health.



- Enhances the development of new cells including nail, hair, and skin cells
- Helps produce normal red blood cells which prevents anemia
- Protects against heart disease and some types of cancer
- Reduces the risk of dementias including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease