Facts About Folic Acid

What is folic acid and why do I need it?

Folic acid is a B-vitamin your body needs every day to be healthy. And, if you become pregnant, it 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.

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 are the other benefits of folic acid?

Taking folic acid daily throughout life may reduce the risk of having:

- heart disease
- high blood pressure
- stroke
- some types of cancer

How can my family and I get enough folic acid (400 mcg) every day?

✓ **Eat one serving of a cereal that has all the folic acid you need every day.**

OR

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

It also helps to get extra folic acid (folate) from a healthy diet that includes foods high in folate like beans and lentils, dark green leafy vegetables, citrus fruits and juices, and nuts. **But, you still have to eat cereal or take a vitamin pill every day to get all the folic acid you need.**

For more information about folic acid, call the March of Dimes, 1-888-663-4637.

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Folic Acid

Every Woman, Every Day

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

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 the folic acid you need every day.**

Supplement Facts

Serving Size: One tablet

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value
Vitamin A	5000 IU	100
Vitamin C	60 mg	100
Vitamin D	400 IU	100
Vitamin E	30 IU	100
Vitamin K	25 mcg	31
Thiamin (B1)	1.5 mg	100
Riboflavin (B20	1.7 mg	100
Niacin	20 mg	100
Vitamin B6	2 mg	100
Folic Acid	400 mcg	100
Vitamin B12	6 mcg	100

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (55 g)
Servings Per Container About 12

Amount Per Serving	(Name of cereal)	with 1/2 cup skim milk
Calories	170	210
Calories from Fat	10	10
	% Daily Value**	
Total Fat 1 g*	1%	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%	0%
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g		
Monounsaturated Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**	**1%**
Sodium 240 mg	**10%**	**13%**
Potassium 360mg	**10%**	**16%**
Total Carbohydrate 41g	**14%**	**16%**
Dietary Fiber 5g	20%	20%
Sugars 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%
Vitamin B12	100%	110%
Pantothenic Acid	100%	100%
Phosphorus	10%	25%
Magnesium	10%	10%
Zinc	100%	100%
Copper	8%	8%

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 the number "100%" in the right column. It is important that the number say "100%" of your "daily value" (need) for "folic acid" or "folate."