



**FOLIC ACID
PREVENTS
BIRTH DEFECTS!**

**Update:
Medicaid now
covers
prescriptions for
prenatal vitamins
containing folic
acid! This applies
to all women ages
12 – 60 regardless
of pregnancy
status.**

**Women need
adequate folic
acid before AND
during pregnancy!**

Folic Acid: What's New?

As you may already know...

- Folic acid is a B vitamin that everyone's body needs to make new cells.
- Any woman who can become pregnant (even if she isn't thinking about pregnancy) needs 400 micrograms per day.
- [Certain high-risk women](#) need a prescription for 4000 micrograms per day.
- It is difficult to get enough folic acid from food alone, so a daily dietary supplement is recommended.
- Visit www.folicstrong.org for more information and resources.

Common Reasons Women Don't Take Dietary Supplements Containing Folic Acid:

- Were not planning a pregnancy.
- Have trouble remembering, or are busy.
- Feel they get enough folic acid from foods.
- Worry supplements will be too expensive.
- Believe supplements will upset their stomach.
- Taking a supplement was not suggested by someone they trust to give them health advice.

Suggestions to Help Women Get Enough Folic Acid Every Day:

- Utilize messages on how folic acid impacts health and beauty, especially with young women.
- Suggest a memory aid such as setting a cell phone reminder, taking vitamins after brushing teeth, or keeping vitamins somewhere visible.
- Help women to understand the relationship between folic acid and the prevention of birth defects.
- Suggest taking supplements with food to reduce risk of stomach upset.
- Educate women that folic acid may be a covered benefit under their health insurance.

Project made possible by the [University of Wisconsin-Madison Waisman Center](#) and the [Wisconsin Genetics Systems Integration \(GSI\) Hub](#) which are supported by Maternal and Child Health Title V Services Block Grant dollars to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health at the Department of Health Services.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015) Folic Acid: Facts about Folic Acid. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/about.html>. Retrieved August 3, 2015.

Barbour RS, Macleod M, Mires G, Anderson AS. Uptake of folic acid supplements before and during pregnancy: focus group analysis of women's views and experiences. *J Hum Nutr Diet* 2012;25(2):140-147. DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-277X.2011.01216.x