

Health Officials Highlight Importance of Folic Acid During Awareness Week- A Simple Habit With Lifesaving Impact

[City, State] — With approximately 1 in 33 babies in the United States born each year with a birth defect, health advocates are spotlighting a simple yet powerful step toward prevention: daily folic acid intake. Folic Acid Awareness Week 2025 focuses on preventing serious birth defects through education and daily supplements.

Folate is naturally found in foods like leafy greens and beans. Folic acid may be added to many grain products and is available in supplements. It is safe, effective, and is the only form proven to help prevent neural tube defects (NTDs), which are a group of serious and often life-threatening birth defects that affect the brain and spine. NTDs, which include spina bifida, anencephaly, and encephalocele, can develop within the first month of pregnancy, often before a woman even realizes she is expecting. This makes early prevention efforts especially critical. Health experts recommend that all women who can become pregnant take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily. This can be achieved by taking a daily multivitamin with folic acid and eating fortified foods such as enriched breads, cereals, and pasta. Checking food and supplement labels can help ensure adequate intake. Even for women not planning a pregnancy, folic acid supports healthy cell growth, contributing to overall wellness.

You can take a multivitamin that includes folic acid or a supplement that has only folic acid. You can find multivitamins and folic acid supplements at most pharmacies and grocery stores. Be sure to check the label and choose a multivitamin or supplement with 400 mcg of folic acid. Take your folic acid at the same time every day. For example, take it when you get up in the morning or when you eat breakfast. Leave the bottle somewhere you'll notice it every day, like on the kitchen or bathroom counter, but be sure to keep it out of reach of young children.

In addition to taking a folic acid supplement, it's important to follow a healthy eating routine. Make sure to include foods with folate in your diet. Choose to add a variety of foods such as Spinach and other leafy greens, asparagus, oranges/orange juice, peas, and beans. Folic acid is also added to foods like many cereals, breads, pastas, nuts, seeds, and other foods made with grains. Check the Nutrition Facts label and choose foods with folic acid.

Folic Acid Awareness Week 2025 serves as an important reminder that small, everyday choices—like taking a vitamin—can make a big difference in the health of future generations. Help raise awareness in your community. Encourage the women in your life to take a daily folic acid supplement and choose folate-rich foods. Together, we can promote healthier pregnancies and protect future generations.

Join us in promoting awareness and taking action. Together, we can help ensure healthier beginnings for all babies.

To learn more about folic acid, how much you need, and where to find it, visit the CDC's folic acid resource page at: <https://www.cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/intake-and-sources.html>.

You can also explore additional resources provided by the National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN) at: <https://www.nbdpn.org/folic-acid-awareness-month/>.



NBDPN

NATIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS
PREVENTION NETWORK