



Folic Acid Awareness Week

September 8-14, 2024 | #InMyFolicAcidEra

Neural tube defects (NTDs) affect about 3,000 pregnancies each year in the United States, leading to birth defects of the brain and spine and cleft lip and palate.¹ If women of **reproductive age*** take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day prior to becoming pregnant, and a prenatal vitamin that has 600 mcg of folic acid during pregnancy it may help **prevent up to 70 percent** of NTDs.¹

Data continues to illustrate the significant role health education plays in public health in reducing risks for poor health outcomes. Women of reproductive age should be counseled on the importance of holistic, preventative well-woman visits and available resources to access affordable quality healthcare in their communities.

* "reproductive age" specific to folic acid supplementation is defined as use in all women ages 18-49 and select use for those aged 13-17.

Pregnancy Intention and Folic Acid

Women with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to take folic acid supplements.²

In 2018-2020 (three years of data combined), the percentage of Kansas residents with a recent live birth who did not take a multivitamin, prenatal vitamin, or folic acid vitamin in the month before getting pregnant differed significantly by:



Non-Hispanic Black women, Hispanic women, and non-Hispanic women of other/mixed race, compared to non-Hispanic White women.



Women who received WIC food during pregnancy, compared to those who did not receive WIC.



Women under 25 years old, compared to women who were 25 years or older.



Women living in rural counties, compared to women living in urban counties.



Women who received late or no prenatal care, compared to women who sought prenatal care in the first trimester.



Women who did not intend to or weren't sure if they wanted to become pregnant, compared to women who intended to be pregnant.



Women who were uninsured or had Medicaid/KanCare in the month before pregnancy, compared to women who had primary health insurance coverage in the month before pregnancy.

PRAMS Data

Nearly half of Kansas residents with a recent live birth in 2020 (48.3%) reported **not taking** a multivitamin, prenatal vitamin, or folic acid vitamin in the month before getting pregnant (95% Confidence Interval [CI]: 44.7%-51.9%). From 2017 to 2020, there was not enough evidence to show that the overall trend in pre-pregnancy vitamin use changed significantly.

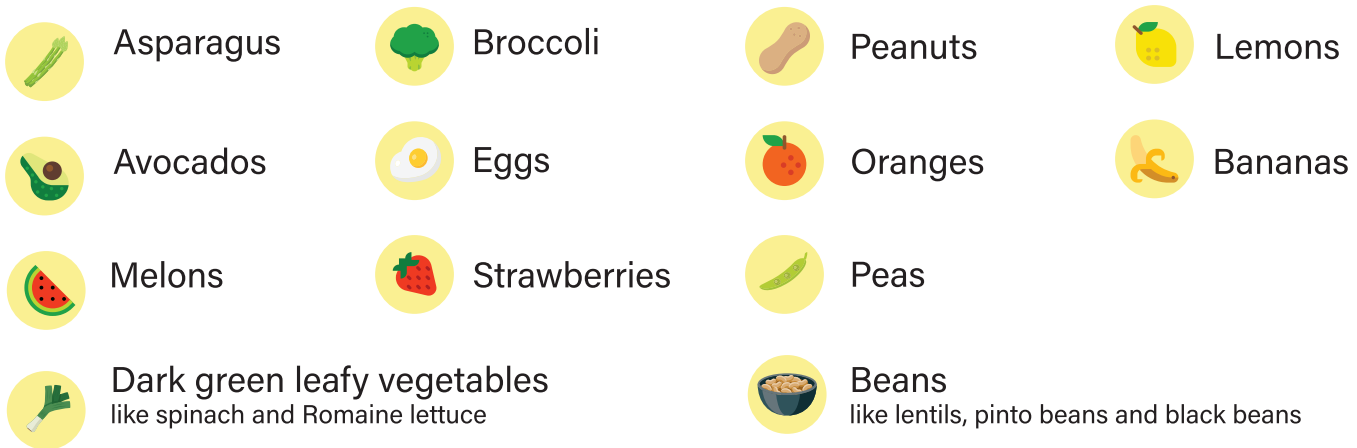
Data was gathered from the Kansas Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2017-2020. PRAMS is a survey where women who recently gave birth are interviewed about their health and experiences before, during and shortly after pregnancy.

Pregnancy and Folic Acid

Because nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges all women of reproductive age to take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid each day, in addition to consuming food with folate from a varied diet, to help prevent some major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine.³ During pregnancy, a prenatal vitamin that has 600 micrograms of folic acid in it should be taken every day.¹

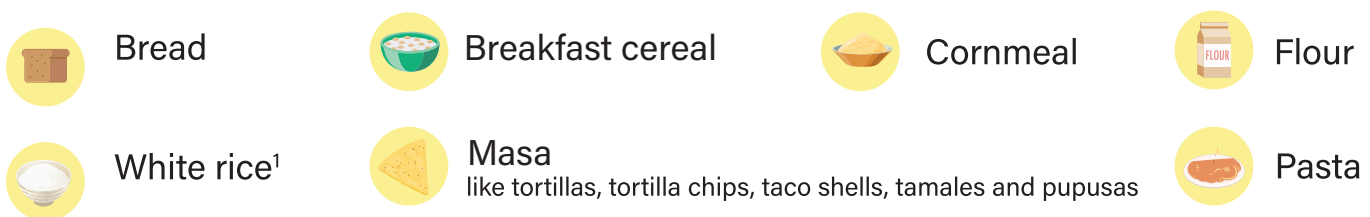
Neural tube defects (NTDs) affect about 3,000 pregnancies each year in the United States. If all women take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day before getting pregnant and during early pregnancy, it may help prevent up to 7 in 10 (70 percent) NTDs.¹

Folic acid can be found in:



Everyone needs folic acid, but it is especially important for women before, during, and after pregnancy. The body does not naturally create folic acid, but needs it to make new cells. The only way to ensure you get enough is through a daily vitamin that contains 400 micrograms (mcg) pre-pregnancy and 600 micrograms (mcg) during pregnancy.

Foods that can be fortified with folic acid include:



Folic Acid Resources

- National Birth Defects Prevention Network: [2024 National Folic Acid Awareness Week](#)
 - March of Dimes: [Folic acid | March of Dimes](#)
 - Centers for Disease Control: [Folic acid | CDC](#)
 - Folic Acid: [Facts for Clinicians](#)
 - Office of Women's Health: [Folic acid | OASH](#)
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Pregnancy and Birth Resources

- [Kansas Becoming a Mom® Program](#)
- [Kansas Birth Defects Program](#)
- [Kansas Pregnancy and Birth Resources](#)

Preconception Health and Planning Resources

- Reproductive Health National Training Center: [Preconception Health Toolkit](#)
- Reproductive Life Plan: [My Life, My Goals](#)
- Show Your Love: [Wellness Resources](#)
- Women's Preventative Services Initiative: [Recommendations for Well-Woman Care](#)

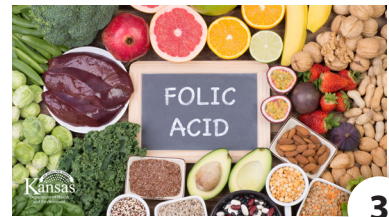
Social Media Messages



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3



4



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Post 1

Folic acid is a B vitamin that every cell in the body needs for healthy growth and development. When taken before pregnancy and during early pregnancy, folic acid can help protect baby from developing neural tube defects (NTD) such as anencephaly and spina bifida. Learn more at cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html.

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El ácido fólico es una vitamina B que cada célula del cuerpo necesita para un crecimiento y desarrollo saludables. Cuando se toma antes del embarazo y durante el embarazo temprano, el ácido fólico puede ayudar a proteger al bebé de desarrollar defectos del tubo neural (DTN), como la anencefalia y la espina bífida. Aprenda más en cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

Post 2

Taking 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day before getting pregnant and during early pregnancy, may help prevent 70% of neural tube defects. Learn more at cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

Tomar 400 microgramos (mcg) de ácido fólico todos los días antes de quedar embarazada y durante el embarazo temprano puede ayudar a prevenir el 70% de los defectos del tubo neural. Aprenda más en cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

Post 3

Folate is a naturally occurring form of Vitamin B that can be found in healthy foods, like leafy greens, peas, avocados, strawberries, and eggs. Even with a healthy folate-rich diet supplementing your intake with at least 400 micrograms (MCG) of folic acid each day is recommended for all women of reproductive age. Learn more at cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

El folato es una forma natural de vitamina B que se puede encontrar en alimentos saludables, como verduras de hoja verde, chícharos, aguacates, fresas y huevos. Incluso con una dieta saludable rica en folato, se recomienda complementar su ingesta con al menos 400 microgramos (MCG) de ácido fólico por día para todas las mujeres en edad reproductiva. Aprenda más en cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

Post 4

The body does not create folate or folic acid. The only source of folic acid is through food and supplements. While some foods naturally contain it, and other foods can be enriched with it, supplements are the best way to ensure you are getting as much as your body needs to support a pregnancy. Learn more at cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

El cuerpo no crea folato ni ácido fólico. La única fuente de ácido fólico son los alimentos y los suplementos. Aunque algunos alimentos lo contienen de forma natural, y otros alimentos pueden estar enriquecidos con él, los suplementos son la mejor manera de asegurarse de que está recibiendo tanto como su cuerpo necesita para apoyar un embarazo. Aprenda más en cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

Post 5

The first week of the New Year we celebrate #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek. Give your baby as healthy of a new start as possible by taking at least 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day before you become pregnant and during pregnancy, a prenatal vitamin that has 600 mcg of folic acid in it should be taken every day. Learn more at cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024

La primera semana del nuevo año celebramos la #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek Dale a tu bebé un nuevo comienzo lo más saludable posible tomando al menos 400 microgramos (mcg) de ácido fólico todos los días antes de quedarse embarazada y durante el embarazo, una vitamina prenatal que contenga 600 mcg de ácido fólico todos los días. Aprenda más en cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/index.html. #InMyFolicAcidEra #FolicAcidAwarenessWeek2024



References

1. Folic acid. March of Dimes. (n.d.). Retrieved November 22, 2022, from marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/pregnancy/folic-acid
2. Ezzeddin, N., Zavoshy, R., & Noroozi, M. (2019, November). *Prevalence of folic acid supplement consumption before and during pregnancy, and its determinants among Community Health Center referrals*. Obstetrics & gynecology science. Retrieved November 22, 2022, from ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6856478/
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). *Office of dietary supplements - folate*. NIH Office of Dietary Supplements. Retrieved December 1, 2022, from ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Folate-HealthProfessional/
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, June 28). *Unintended pregnancy*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved November 22, 2022, from cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/unintendedpregnancy/index.htm