



march  of dimes®

**WELCOME!
PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY NOW.**

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March of Dimes Mission

To improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

How does March of Dimes help?



Fund Research
to understand the
problems and discover
answers.



Help Moms
have full-term
pregnancies and
healthy babies.



Support Families
comforting them
when their baby
needs help to survive
and thrive.



b⁹

New Mexico Folic Acid Initiative

Folic Acid – What is Vitamin B9 and how do I get it?

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What is Folic Acid?

Folic acid, also known as vitamin B9 or folate, is a B vitamin that every cell in your body needs to grow and develop normally.





Folic Acid/Vitamin B9 or Folate

- Folate occurs naturally in certain foods.
- Folic acid/vitamin B9 can be taken in the form of pills and can be found in multivitamins.
- Folic acid/vitamin B9 is a water soluble vitamin which means you need a continuous supply of it in your body.



What is Folic Acid?

If you take folic acid before you become pregnant and during your pregnancy, it may help prevent birth defects of the brain and spine called neural tube defects (NTDs).

A woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants with a white stripe down the side, is captured in a lunge position in a park. The background shows trees and a clear sky. The image is split into three vertical panels: the top panel shows her upper body, the middle panel shows her full body in the lunge, and the bottom panel shows her lower body and legs.

Why is Folic Acid Important?

- Folate is needed to make red blood cells.
- Red blood cells help carry oxygen to all parts of your body.
- Healthy red blood cells give you energy for all the activities you need and want to do.

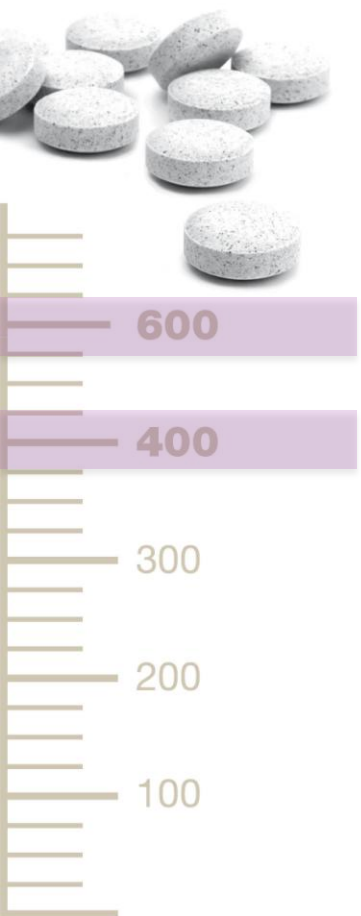
Why is Folic Acid Important?

- Helps your body process fats and proteins. This is called metabolism.
- Necessary for healthy skin, hair, nails, eyes and liver.
- Helps the nervous system function properly.



Why is Folic Acid Important?

- Crucial for proper brain function and plays an important role in mental and emotional health.
- Helps with rapid cell division during times when your body is growing quickly like infancy, adolescence, and pregnancy.



How Much Folic Acid Do You Need?

If you are a woman ages 15 to 44,

You need: 400 mcg (micrograms) of folic acid daily

If you are pregnant,

You need: 600 mcg (micrograms) of folic acid daily

You can get the right amount from certain foods & vitamin supplements.



Folate Occurs Naturally in...

- ✓ Spinach
- ✓ Avocados
- ✓ Peanuts
- ✓ Asparagus
- ✓ Romaine Lettuce
- ✓ Broccoli
- ✓ Black Beans
- ✓ Garbanzo Beans
- ✓ Pinto Beans
- ✓ Lima Beans
- ✓ Kidney Beans
- ✓ Lentils
- ✓ Strawberries
- ✓ Oranges
- ✓ Tomato Juice
- ✓ Orange Juice
- ✓ Cantaloupe

The background of the slide is a collage of various breads and pastries, including round loaves, a baguette, and a poppy seed bun, arranged around a central white text box.

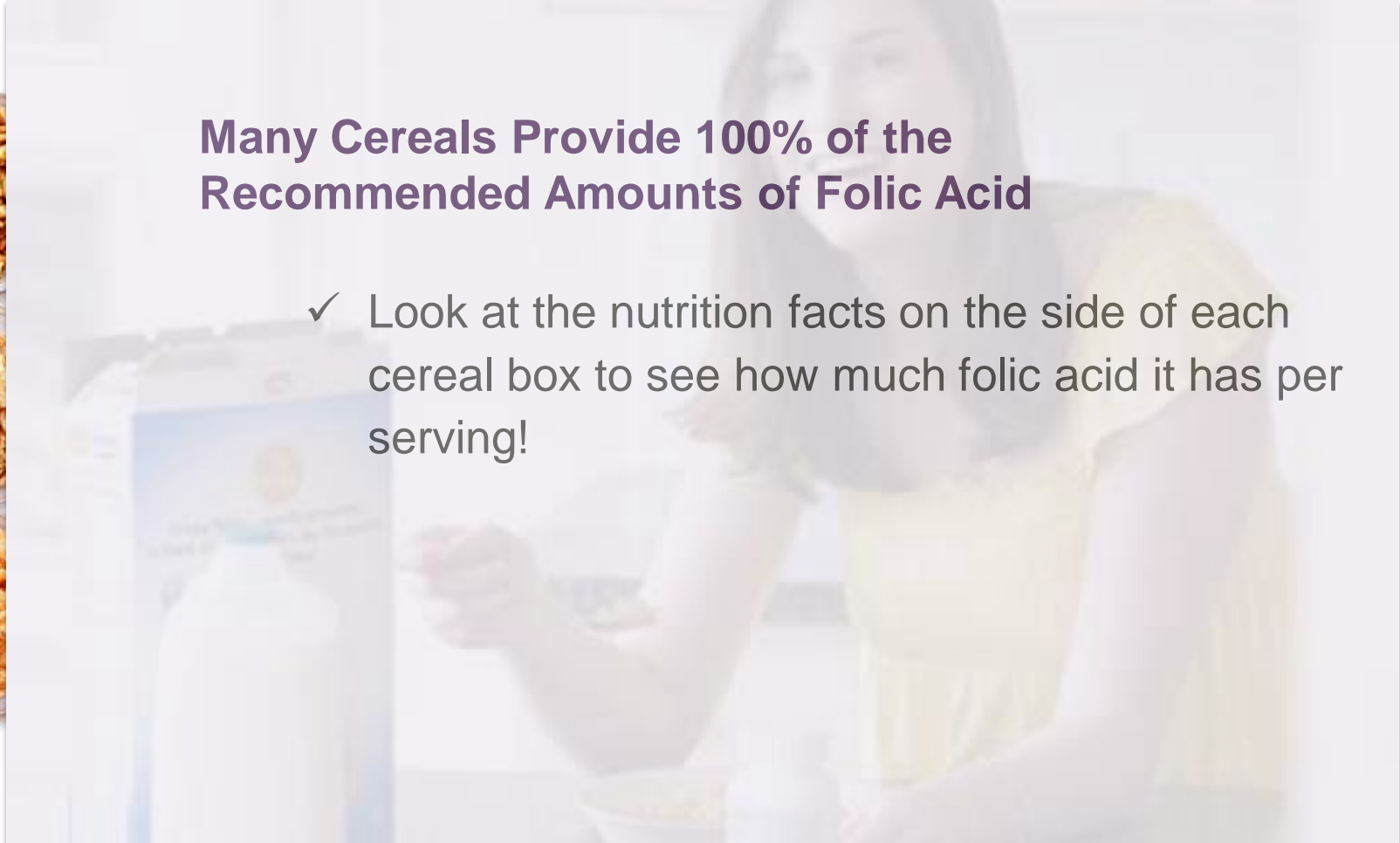
Foods Enriched with Folic Acid

- ✓ Cereals
- ✓ Foods made with White flour:
 - Pasta
 - White Bread

Important Note: Corn masa is not fortified with folic acid like white flour. Corn tortillas, and other foods made with corn masa, are NOT a source of folic acid.



Many Cereals Provide 100% of the Recommended Amounts of Folic Acid

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- ✓ Look at the nutrition facts on the side of each cereal box to see how much folic acid it has per serving!

Why Take a Multivitamin?

- Taking a multivitamin, in addition to eating a healthy diet, is the **ONLY** way to be sure you are getting enough folic acid in your body every day.
- Heat, cooking, light and air can damage folate in foods and decrease the amount you actually get in your diet.



Why Take a Multivitamin?

- 50% (1/2) of pregnancies are unplanned – It doesn't matter if you are married or single, it is best to be prepared!
- It can help make up for other vitamins and minerals you may be missing in your diet.



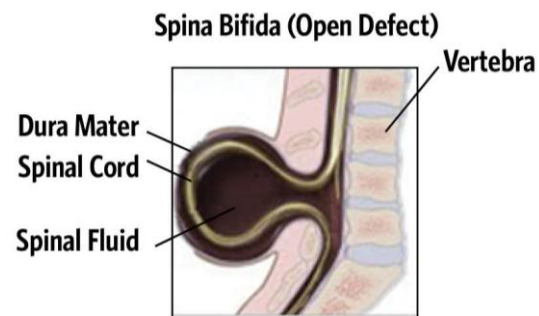


Lack of Folic Acid Before and During Pregnancy

- Can cause neural tube defects
 - Two most common types
 - Spina Bifida
 - Anencephaly

Spina Bifida

- When the lower portion of the spine (neural tube) fails to close properly.



Spina Bifida Health Complications

- There is usually nerve damage that causes at least some paralysis of the legs.
- Problems going to the bathroom.
- Learning and Social Problems
- Obesity

Anencephaly

- When the upper portion of the spine (neural tube) fails to close properly.
- The baby's brain does not develop completely or is entirely missing. The baby dies shortly after birth.

IMPORTANT!

- On average, 91 babies are born with a neural tube defect in New Mexico each year.
- Many neural tube defects (NTDs) can be prevented when 400 mcg of folic acid is taken everyday at least 3 months **PRIOR TO BECOMING PREGNANT** and through the **duration of the PREGNANCY.**



**THANK YOU!
PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY NOW.**

