

LEVELS OF FOLIC ACID AND FOLATE IN SOME COMMON FOODS (MICROGRAMS)

1 bowl of Kellogg's Special K, Corn Flakes or Rice Krispies+		100
1 helping of brussels sprouts		100
9g of Bovril		95
1 helping of spinach		80
1 bowl of other Kellogg's breakfast cereals**		50
1 orange		50
1 helping of green beans		50
Serving of potatoes		45
1 helping of cauliflower		45
1 helping of baked beans		44
4g of Marmite		40
1 pint milk		35
Fortified bread per slice+		32
1 helping of peas		30
Unfortified bread per slice		12

Additional 400 micrograms Folic acid daily is recommended for women who may conceive.

+ Contains *Folic acid*. Not all bread and breakfast cereals are fortified with *Folic acid*. Check label to see which brands are.

* All Kellogg's breakfast cereals (except for Kellogg's Country Store) are fortified with *Folic acid*.

SPINA BIFIDA occurs very early in pregnancy. It is a defect in the development of the spine, when one or more vertebrae fail to close properly, leaving a gap.

The spinal cord and nerves can be damaged resulting in total or partial paralysis below the defect. More than 85% of people with spina bifida also have hydrocephalus.

HYDROCEPHALUS is caused by an excess of cerebro-spinal fluid in the head. Excessive swelling can cause accelerated growth of a baby's head and damage to the brain.



ASSOCIATION FOR SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS
Registered Charity No: 249338

Every year some 200 babies are born in the UK severely disabled by spina bifida.

Today there are more than 15,000 people of all ages - who, with support, can live fulfilled lives.

ASBAH exists to give that support and to sponsor medical and educational research.

All our funds come from voluntary donations and we would welcome any contribution you would like to make.

This leaflet has been produced by ASBAH, 42 Park Road, Peterborough, PE1 2UQ. Tel: 01733 555988 and printed on their behalf by the Kellogg Company of Great Britain Limited.

You can obtain more copies by writing to: ASBAH Leaflet, Unit 2, Coleville Court, Calver Road, Winwick Quay, Warrington, WA2 8QT. or telephone Kellogg's Freephone 0800 626 066.



PRINTED 1995

FOLIC ACID - WHAT EVERY WOMAN NEEDS TO KNOW

This leaflet is about eating for a healthy baby even before you become pregnant



OVER HALF OF ALL PREGNANCIES ARE UNPLANNED.

So even if you do not intend to become pregnant, this information may still apply to you.

Recent scientific findings show that some serious birth defects can be prevented by making sure your diet contains enough of the vitamin, *Folic acid*, before conception.

These birth defects are known as Neural Tube Defects (NTD).

The Department of Health now recommends that all women of child-bearing age need considerably more *Folic acid* in their diet. You can get *Folic acid* from eating fortified foods, such as many breakfast cereals and certain breads.



WHAT ARE NEURAL TUBE DEFECTS?

The neural tube forms the unborn baby's spine. Defects occur during the very earliest stages of pregnancy, even before your pregnancy has been confirmed. Neural Tube Defects can lead to lifelong disabilities - in particular Spina Bifida.

FACTS ABOUT NEURAL TUBE DEFECTS

1 in every 3,000 newborns have NTD.

NTD occurs very early in pregnancy.

95% of affected babies are born to mothers who have not previously given birth to an NTD baby. This means that all women are at risk.

Diets with sufficient folic acid and folates can significantly reduce the risk of having an NTD baby.

You need to get enough folic acid and folates from your food before conception and in the first few weeks of pregnancy.

All women of childbearing age should eat diets with enough folic acid and folates every day, whether they are planning a pregnancy or not.

You can take folic acid as a vitamin tablet.

FOLIC ACID AND FOLATES - WHAT ARE THEY?

They are a part of the group of vitamins called the "B complex" - vitamins that everybody needs, regardless of age or sex. They are essential for the formation and healthy growth of cells in the body. However, *Folic acid* and *Folates* are especially important for women who could possibly conceive, or who are planning a pregnancy.



WHERE DO I FIND FOLIC ACID AND FOLATES?

Most women get about 200 micrograms of *Folic acid* and *Folates* daily in their diets. The Department of Health now recommends that women eat an additional 400 micrograms (*) of *Folic acid* daily.

You can do this by eating more foods fortified with *Folic acid*. Fortified breakfast cereals are a rich source. Some breads are also fortified. Remember, it is always important to check the label to see which particular brands of these foods actually do contain *Folic acid*.

Folates occur in dark green leafy vegetables, such as broccoli, sprouts and spinach. They are also found in other foods, such as peas, potatoes, oranges, Marmite and Bovril.

A further way of increasing your intake of *Folic acid* to the recommended daily amount is by tablet/capsule.

** If you have already had a baby affected by NTD it is essential to consult your doctor. It may be wise to have a prescription for a much higher intake of Folic acid.*



Some fruits, vegetables

and yeast extracts, contain this vitamin in another form called *Folates* and women have been recommended to eat more of these as well.

