

Don't just cross your fingers and hope for a healthy baby - Be fabulous and prepare your body. Start today!

- Remember to take 400 micrograms (0.4 mg) folic acid every day. New recommendations mean you need even more than you think - 4 mg per day* three months prior to conception and through the first month of pregnancy, to prevent serious birth defects of the brain and spine.*This amount should not be taken as extra multivitamins. Talk to your doctor about adding folate supplements.
- Discuss your family medical history with your health care provider, particularly any information regarding pregnancy problems or birth defects.
- Focus on improving your nutrition and maintaining your ideal weight. Exercise regularly and eat more fresh fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy. Do not diet while trying to conceive or during pregnancy.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up to date - especially rubella.
- Eliminate the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Review your medications, and ask your healthcare provider about diseases or medications that could affect your baby's health.
- Avoid undercooked meat and handling cat litter - sources of toxoplasmosis which can cause severe health problems for a baby.



Fabulous Folate

Oh Baby, It's Good for YOU!

Whatever your greatest challenge may be - work, school, or raising a family - there's one little thing you can do to make a big difference for your health (and your baby's)...



The SC Neural Tube Defect Prevention Initiative is operated through a cooperative agreement among:

Greenwood Genetic Center
SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs
SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

Be fabulous with more folic acid!

A daily vitamin helps you look better and feel great- it promotes your overall health, and that's very important when you're busy and don't have time to eat the way you should.

Vitamins are even more important for women. Make sure your daily multivitamin contains 400 micrograms (0.4 mg) of folic acid (folate). Based upon new recommendations, three months prior to conception and through the first month after conception, you need 4 mg of folic acid (folate) per day to minimize your risk of having a baby with birth defects involving the spine and brain. Multivitamins and healthy diets contain some of what's needed, but extra folic acid supplements are now suggested.

What is folic acid?

Folic acid, or folate, is a B-complex vitamin found in leafy green vegetables such as spinach and collards, fresh fruit, and liver. In addition to overall good health, 4 mg of folic acid per day, in the form of a supplement - when taken three months prior to conception and during the first month of pregnancy - reduces the risk of neural tube defects (serious birth defects that affect the spine and brain.) Don't wait until you become pregnant to begin good nutrition. It will be too late. Talk to your healthcare provider now about taking more folic acid. It's a fabulous way to help prevent birth defects!

Why does folic acid matter?

Because women work hard. We know it's easy to get pulled in many directions with the demands of career, family and friends. Healthy habits such as daily exercise, adequate rest, and proper nutrition - including taking folic acid each day - will help you meet your challenges every day and help you have a healthy pregnancy in the future.

Don't wait until you become pregnant to begin good nutrition. It will be too late. Talk to your healthcare provider now about taking more folic acid.

It's a fabulous way to help prevent birth defects!

To learn more, talk with your healthcare provider or call us at 1-800-676-6332.



The SC Birth Defects Prevention Program now recommends that all women of childbearing age take a multivitamin containing folic acid every day along with additional folic acid supplements to reach 4 mg/day in order to reduce the risk of serious birth defects of the spine and brain.