



# Folic Acid

Folic acid is a B vitamin that is essential to good health. Folic acid may also be called folate or folacin. Adults 19 and older need 400 micrograms of folic acid each day. Pregnant women need 600 micrograms daily. It is recommended that no one consume more than 1000 micrograms daily of folic acid because it can be dangerous in excess amounts.

If women have enough folic acid in their bodies before getting pregnant and during pregnancy many birth defects of the brain and spine in their babies can be prevented. If there is a chance that you could get pregnant, be sure to get enough folic acid. About half of all pregnancies are not planned and by the time your pregnancy is confirmed your baby's brain and spine have already been formed.

Current research shows that folic acid also plays a role in lowering the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and certain cancers.

## Good Sources of Folic Acid

Dark Green Leafy Vegetables  
 Dry Beans and Peas  
 Fortified Breads and Cereals\*  
 Beef and Chicken Livers

\*Some breakfast cereals provide 100% of the folic acid needed in one serving. Look for 100% on the Nutrition Facts label.



## Daily Folic Acid Needs

Infants, 0-6 months	65 µg
Infants, 7-12 months	80 µg
Children, 1-3 years	150 µg
Children, 4-8 years	200 µg
Males, 9-13 years	300 µg
Males, 14+ years	400 µg
Females, 9-13 years	300 µg
Females, 14+ years	400 µg
Pregnancy, any age	600 µg
Breastfeeding, any age	500 µg

µg=microgram (mcg)

National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine 2007.

To reach your goal of eating 400 micrograms of folic acid each day:

- Add folic acid rich foods into your daily diet.
- Eat folic acid enriched breakfast cereal.
- Consider taking a multivitamin that contains 400 micrograms of folic acid.

Know how. Know **now**.

## Folic Acid in Foods

Food	mcg
Lentils, boiled, 1 cup	358
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans), boiled, 1 cup	282
Asparagus, boiled, 6 spears	131
Spinach, boiled, ½ cup	131
Orange juice (from concentrate), 1 cup	109
Rice, cooked, 1 cup	95
Canned corn, ½ cup	57
Cooked pasta, enriched, ½ cup	51
Romaine lettuce, ½ cup	38
Strawberries, 1 cup	38
White bread, enriched, 1 slice	24

\*check labels for fortification

## Cereals fortified with 400 micrograms of Folic Acid per serving

Total (all flavors)
Kellogg's All-Bran cereals
Kellogg's Low-fat Granola without Raisins, Special K, Smart Start
General Mills Total, Multi-Bran Chex, and Wheat Chex
Malt-O-Meal (all flavors - cook and serve)
Malt-O-Meal Frosted Mini Spooners and Crispy Rice
Quaker Cap-n-Crunch: Original, Peanut Butter Crunch, and Crunch Berries
Quaker Cinnamon Life

\*The cereals listed above are all registered trademarks of their respective company.

## Salsa Lentil Soup

Makes 8 servings

2 T. vegetable oil  
 2 T. onion, finely chopped  
 ½ tsp. garlic powder  
 5 cups water  
 1 (16 oz.) jar salsa  
 1 cup lentils, uncooked  
 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce  
 ½ cup instant brown rice, uncooked  
 1 cup shredded carrots  
 1 medium green pepper, finely chopped



1. In a large sauce pan, heat oil. Add onions and garlic powder. Cook, stirring frequently, for 3-5 minutes or until onions are tender.
2. Add the water, salsa, lentils and tomato sauce; mix well. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 35 minutes.
3. Add the rice. Turn the heat to medium-high until the mixture boils. Cover. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Remove from heat. Add carrots and green pepper. Let stand for five minutes.

*Nutrition Facts per Serving: 170 calories, 4 g fat (6%DV), .5 g saturated fat (3%DV), 0 mg cholesterol (0%DV), 410 mg sodium (17%DV), 26 g total carbohydrates (9%DV), 10 g fiber (38%DV), 6 g sugar, 9 g protein, vitamin A 45%, vitamin C 40%, calcium 4%, iron 20%*

Revised 12/2010