

## SOURCES OF FOLIC ACID

Total recommended dietary allowance  
is 400 mcg per day.

Food	Portion Size	Folic acid (mcg)
<u>Fruits and Vegetables</u>		
Avocado (Florida)	1 medium	162
Asparagus	1/2 cup boiled	131
Spinach	1/2 cup boiled	131
Avocado (California)	1 medium	113
Orange Juice	1 cup	109
Turnip greens	1/2 cup boiled	85
Pineapple juice	1 cup (canned)	58
Broccoli	1/2 cup boiled	54
Peas	1/2 cup boiled	51
Brussels sprouts	1/2 cup boiled	47
Orange	1 medium	47
Plantain	1 cup cooked	40
Romaine lettuce	1/2 cup shredded	38
Tomato juice	6 ounces	36
Cauliflower	1/2 cup boiled	32
Strawberries	1 cup raw	26
Sweet potato	1 baked medium	26
Grapefruit juice	1 cup (canned)	26
Banana	1 medium	22
<u>Grains</u>		
Pasta, cooked	1 cup	120
Fortified cereals	1 cup	100-400
Wild rice, cooked	1 cup	43
<u>Meat/Meat Substitutes</u>		
Lentils	1 cup boiled	358
Pink beans	1 cup boiled	284
Chick peas	1 cup boiled	282
Liver, cooked	3 1/2 ounces	217
Great Northern beans	1 cup canned	213
Pigeon peas	1 cup boiled	186
White beans	1 cup canned	171
Navy beans	1 cup canned	163
Pinto beans	1 cup canned	145
Yellow beans	1 cup boiled	143
Kidney beans	1 cup canned	129
Black beans	1/2 cup cooked	128
Blackeye peas	1 cup canned	123
Lima beans	1 cup canned	121
Beans, baked	1 cup (vegetarian)	61
Tempeh	1/2 cup	43

## COUNTY OF BERGEN New Jersey



KATHLEEN A. DONOVAN  
*Bergen County Executive*

AND THE

BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

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**Department of Health Services**  
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## Women and Folic Acid

### What's the Connection?



**Bergen County**  
**Department of Health Services**  
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## What is folic acid?

Folic acid, also called folate (the form of folic acid found in foods), is a B vitamin that has a special role in reducing the risk of certain kinds of birth defects called neural tube defects (NTDs). NTDs affect the brain and spinal cord and can be life threatening. During pregnancy, folic acid helps promote healthy tissue and organ development, which reduces the chance of having a baby with a NTD.

## Why is folic acid important ?

Insufficient levels of folic acid can increase the risk of having a baby with a NTD. Birth defects of the brain and spinal cord occur within the first month of pregnancy before many women know they are pregnant. Getting enough folic acid one month prior to becoming pregnant and during the first trimester may lessen the risk of NTDs. Research has shown that women can reduce their chances



of having a baby with a NTD by 50% to 70% when they have adequate levels of folic acid.

## Who should take folic acid?

It is especially important for women during their childbearing years to get enough folic acid. Since about half of all pregnancies are unplanned, all women



capable of becoming pregnant should take a folic acid supplement everyday.

## How much folic acid is enough?

It is recommended that all women of childbearing age take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily. Adequate levels can be taken in the form of a vitamin containing folic acid or eating a fortified breakfast cereal with 100% Daily Value of folic acid. Increasing daily consumption of folic acid-rich foods also contributes to an adequate intake of folic acid.

## What foods are good sources of folic acid?

Some folic acid-rich foods are orange juice and other



citrus fruits, dark green leafy vegetables, broccoli, asparagus, romaine lettuce, beans, grains and liver. Most women find it is easy to take a vitamin supplement to get the recommended amount of folic acid, but it is still wise to eat foods rich in folic acid every day.

### For more information, contact:

The American Dietetic Association  
1-800-366-1655  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

HealthyNJ  
Information for Healthy Living  
[www.healthynj.org](http://www.healthynj.org)

March of Dimes  
North Jersey, Pine Brook  
973-882-0700  
[www.marchofdimes.com/newjersey/](http://www.marchofdimes.com/newjersey/)

Medline Plus  
U.S. National Library of Medicine  
<http://medlineplus.gov/>