

Mindful Mum | Folate (Folic Acid) Food Sources

Healthy Diet for Pregnancy Guide

How much folate do I need?

The Department of Health recommend you take 400mcg folic acid supplement a day **until the 12th week of your pregnancy**. You should also try to include plenty of foods that are rich in folic acid in your diet (see table to left) making a total of 600 mcg of folate per day from both folate rich foods and a supplement.

Why do I need it?

Studies show women who get 400 micrograms (0.4 milligrams) daily prior to conception and during early pregnancy reduce the risk that their baby will be born with a serious neural tube defect (a birth defect involving incomplete development of the brain and spinal cord) by up to 70%.

What is folate?

Folate is a water-soluble B vitamin (B9) that occurs naturally in food. Folic acid is the synthetic form of folate that is found in supplements and added to fortified foods. Folate gets its name from the Latin word "folium" for leaf. Nearly 70 years ago Dr Lucy Wills identified folate as the nutrient needed to prevent the anaemia of pregnancy. Folate was identified as the corrective substance in yeast extract in the late 1930s, and was extracted from spinach leaves in 1941.

Mindful Mum | Sources of Folate in Food

Folate Food Sources	Mcg(μ g) per 100g
Yeast Extract	1,150
Black Eyed Peas, dry weight	630
*Soya beans, dry weight	370
Soya flour	345
Wheat germ	331
*Special K	330
Sunflower seeds, dry weight	227
*Lentils (red), dry weight	204
*Chickpeas, dry weight	180
Asparagus, lightly steamed	155
Baby sweetcorn, lightly boiled	152
*Spinach, cooked & drained	146
Purple broccoli, lightly steamed	140
Swiss-style muesli	140
*Red kidney beans, dry weight	130
Hazelnuts, dry weight	113
*Brussels sprouts, lightly steamed	110
Walnuts, dry weight	98
Peanut butter, chunky (no salt)	92
Avocado, raw	81
Orange (navels), raw	34
Bananas, raw	20
Grapefruit, raw	12



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Sources: Judith Wills, The Food Bible, 2007 & Nutrition Data website.
For more info go to www.mindfulmum.co.uk

NB: Foods with an * are also rich sources of iron, an important nutrient for pregnancy. Chicken livers has been excluded because the Department of Health recommends avoiding liver whilst pregnant.

Sources: FSA nutrient and food based guidelines for UK institutions - <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/nutrientinstitution.pdf>
Office of Dietary Supplements, National Institutes of Health. -<http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/folate.asp>.



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