

# Nutrition Facts

## Folic Acid Before and During Pregnancy

### What is it?

Folic acid, also known as folate and folacin, is an important B vitamin. Folate and folacin are naturally found in food. Folic acid is the form found in pills or added to food, such as white flour, enriched pasta and enriched cornmeal. All these forms of this B vitamin act similarly in the body.

### Why is it important?

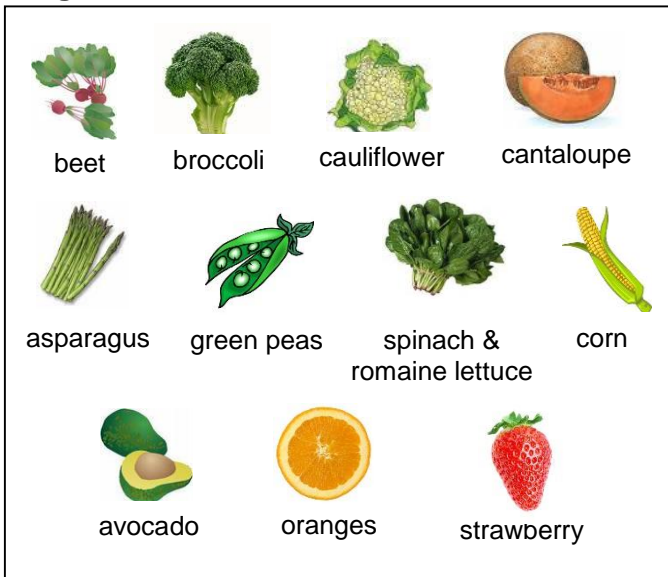
This B vitamin is important to make healthy red blood cells and is essential for the healthy growth of your baby's eyesight, spine, brain, and skull. Having enough folate in your blood early in pregnancy can decrease the risk of your baby's spine developing a malformation called a 'neural tube defect', by 50-70%. Neural tube defects such as spina bifida, usually develop in the first month of pregnancy, before you even know you are pregnant. This is why it is important that all women who could become pregnant get enough folate/folic acid.

### How much do you need?

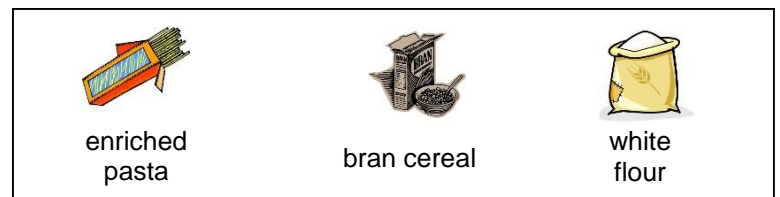
All women who could become pregnant, are pregnant or are breastfeeding should eat a diet rich in folate. They should also take a daily multivitamin containing at least 0.4 mg of folic acid (400 µg), but no more than 1 mg. Talk to your health care provider because some women benefit from taking more.

### What are good food sources of folate?

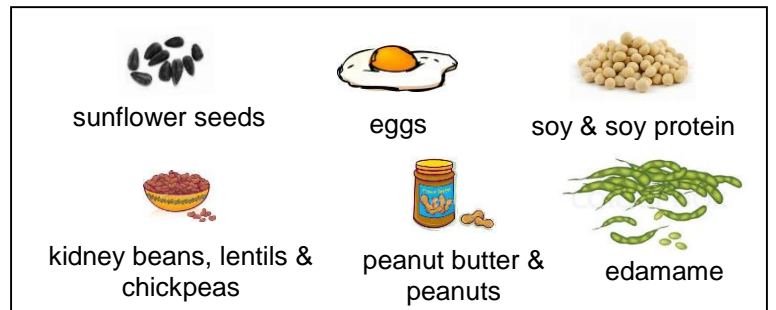
#### Vegetables and Fruit



#### Grain Products



#### Meat and Alternatives



## Tips for Increasing Your Folate Intake

1. Choose breakfast cereals that contain wheat bran or contain 100% daily value (DV) of folic acid/serving. For a list of cereals with 100% DV of folate, visit:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/cerals.html>
2. Eat at least one dark green vegetable (e.g., peas, spinach, romaine lettuce) each day.
3. Cook vegetables and fruit for short periods of time in as little water as possible to limit the loss of folate (e.g., steaming, microwaving).
4. Make a salad with spinach or romaine lettuce instead of iceberg lettuce.
5. Add sunflower seeds, orange slices, or avocado to your salads.
6. Add kidney beans, black beans or lentils to your chili, stew or soup.
7. Add fresh or frozen spinach to lasagna, casseroles, pizza, omelets or soup.
8. Add frozen peas and corn to soups, pasta dishes, stews and casseroles.



## Cheesy Broccoli and Mushroom Frittata

Italian in origin, the frittata is similar to a quiche but without the crust, which means fewer calories

**Preparation Time:** 10 minutes  
**Cooking Time:** About 25 minutes  
**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients:

3 cups (759 mL) Ontario Broccoli florets  
6 eggs  
1/3 cup (75 mL) milk  
Salt and pepper  
1 tbsp (15 mL) vegetable oil  
1/2 cup (125 mL) Ontario Mushrooms, sliced  
1/2 cup (125 mL) shredded low-fat Cheddar cheese  
1/4 cup (50 mL) Parmesan cheese

### Preparation:

Boil broccoli for 2 minutes. Refresh under cold water; drain and pat dry.

Whisk together eggs, milk and salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

In 10-inch (25 cm) non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté mushrooms for 3 minutes. Arrange broccoli over mushrooms; reduce heat to low. Pour egg mixture over broccoli. Sprinkle Cheddar and Parmesan cheeses on top; cook, covered for 20 to 25 minutes or until set. Cut into wedges.

### RECIPES VEGETABLES



#### Nutrients per serving

Protein: 20 grams  
Carbohydrates: 11 grams  
Fat: 16 grams  
Calories: 260  
Good source of fibre