FOLATE

every one
every day

It's important to remember to...
Eat Folate rich foods to grow strong babies.
Eat Folate rich foods for a healthy heart.
Eat Folate rich foods to stay strong.

Every one needs folate,
every day.
What is Folate?

Folate is one of the B-vitamins that your body needs to grow healthy and strong. Folic acid is a man-made form of this vitamin and is added to some foods. These are called ‘fortified foods’.

Why do I need Folate?

Folate can help a baby grow strong especially if the mother takes Folate before becoming pregnant. Folate can help prevent neural tube defects in babies, such as spina bifida. This means the brain and spinal cord of the growing baby doesn’t grow properly. **Folate is good for everyone in the family. It helps to make strong blood.**

How much Folate do I need?

Doctors recommend that adults need 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folate every day, and 600 mcg for women during pregnancy.

Women of child bearing age should consider taking daily folate supplements to ensure their intake is sufficient.

A medium orange contains 65 mcg of Folate
Where do I find Folate?

Australian Authorities permit food manufacturers to add folate to some of their products. These include many breakfast cereals and breakfast bars, Vegemite, Marmite and some brands of bread, milk and fruit juice. You’ll find natural folate in green leafy vegetables and citrus fruits.

In 2009 the Australian government introduced regulations for the mandatory fortification of wheat flour for bread-making to be fortified with folic acid.

The aim of this is to reduce the number of babies being born with neural tube defects.

What was the Folate status of Aboriginal Western Australians before Fortification?

In 2009, Aboriginal people in Broome, Perth and Kalgoorlie helped us to find out how much folate they had in their red blood cells. We found that some Aboriginal people had low folate levels. However, they all had normal levels of vitamin B12.

We also found out that a small number of Aboriginal people took vitamin supplements, but most ate bread brought from the shop every day.

We think mandatory fortification of bread-making flour with folate will reduce the number of Aboriginal babies born with neural tube defects. In the future we need to find out if this has helped Aboriginal people increase their folate levels.

To read more about this study, please ask at reception.
How can I increase my Folate intake?

- **Eat a folate fortified breakfast cereal** several times a week, 30-50 grams (a bowl) contains 75 mcg of Folate
- **Choose folate fortified brands of bread** 2 slices contains 120 mcg of Folate
- **Eat Vegemite or Marmite** (my First Vegemite is low in salt), 5 grams (a thick smear) contains 100 mcg of Folate
- **Folate fortified brand of milk** 200mL (a glass) contains 100 mcg of Folate
- **Drink folate fortified fruit juice** 200mL (a glass) contains 75 mcg of Folate

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For more information please contact your local Aboriginal Medical Health Service