



Folic Acid Sources

The recommendation for 400 mcg. of synthetic folic acid may be met by either consuming enriched cereals and grains or by taking a multi-vitamin or folic acid supplement containing 400 mcg. To decrease the risk of neural tube defects, it is important that all women of reproductive age consume 400 mcg. of synthetic folic acid each day.

Foods Enriched with Folic Acid:

The FDA (<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/hhsfolic.html>) required that folic acid be added to enriched foods effective January 1998. An average serving of enriched bread will provide 15-20 mcg. of folic acid. Breakfast cereals range from 100 –400 mcg. per serving. Eating a breakfast cereal that contains 400 mcg. (100% of DV on the food label) daily is an excellent way to meet the recommended intake. The cereal will provide nutrients in addition to the folic acid and the added milk will provide calcium, a nutrient that is commonly deficient in US diets especially among children, teens, and women. Some breakfast cereals provide 100% of the daily folic acid requirement (400 mcg) (<http://www.cdc.gov/doc.do?id=0900f3ec8000d561>)

Cereals labeled as providing 50% of folic acid content have 200 mcg.; 25% have 100 mcg. The nutritional content of many breakfast cereals is available on Nutrition Data web site (<http://www.nutritiondata.com/foods-00800000000000000000.html>)

Kellog(http://www.kelloggs.com/nutrition/folic_acid/shared/folate_sources.html) and Post (http://web.kraftfoods.com/postcereals/nutrition_wm_folicacid.html) cereals also have information about the folic acid content of their breakfast cereals.

In addition to cereals, other grain products are enriched. The table below provides a sample of the folic acid content of other enriched products.

Food	Quantity	Folic Acid (mcg)	Food Folate (mcg)	Folate total DFE *
Cereals enriched with 100 % RDA	Varies with cereal	400	Varies with cereal	400+
Cereals enriched with 50% RDA	Varies with cereal	200	Varies with cereal	200+
Oats, instant, fortified, plain, prepared with water	1 cup cooked	115	14	129
Cereals enriched with 25% RDA	Varies with cereal	100	Varies with cereal	100+
Bagels, plain, enriched	3" diameter	46	15	61
Pita Bread, white, enriched	1 large 6 ½ "	43	14	57
Fast Food Danish Pastry	1 pastry	40	15	55
Macaroni, cooked, enriched	½ cup	46	8	54
Spaghetti, cooked, enriched	½ cup	46	8	54
Noodles, egg, cooked, enriched	½ cup	46	6	51



Folic Acid Supplement

Most multivitamins contain 400 mcg. of folic acid. Check the label to be sure. Individual folic acid supplements are also available. Information regarding supplements may be found at the following site:

Mayo Clinic: (<http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?objectid=3549DCAA-3380-4B0B-86EB23C76CA5FAE3>)

National Institutes of Health:

(<http://www.cc.nih.gov/cc/supplements/folate.html#provide>)

Food Sources of Folate

A healthy diet includes food sources of folate in addition to getting 400 mcg. from folic acid enriched products or supplement. Everyone should include folate rich foods in their diet. In addition to the folate, foods contain other nutrients and phytochemicals that are important in maintaining good health. Folate from food is not absorbed as efficiently as synthetic folic acid.

The table below provides the food folate content of a sampling of foods.

Foods with 100 mcg. or more				
Food	Quantity	Folic acid content (mcg.)	Food Folate content (mcg.)	Total (DFE)*
Beef Liver	3 oz.	0	187	187
Lentils	1/2 cup	0	179	179
Pinto Beans	1/2 cup	0	147	147
Chicken Liver	3 livers	0	139	139
Asparagus, cooked, boiled, drained	1/2 cup	0	131	131
Black-eyed peas	1/2 cup	0	105	105
Orange juice, frozen concentrate, unsweetened, diluted with 3 volume water	1 cup	0	110	110
Foods with 50-99 mcg.				
Navy beans	1/2 cup	0	81	81
Collards, cooked boiled, drained	1/2 cup (cooked)	0	89	89
Turnip greens, cooked, boiled drained	1/2 cup	0	85	85
Orange juice, raw	1 c	0	74	74
Split Peas	1/2cup	0	64	64
Spinach	1/2 cup cooked	0	51	51



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Mustard greens, cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup	0	51	51
Foods with less than 50 mcg.				
Tomato juice, canned	1 c	0	49	49
Rolls, hamburger or hotdog	1 roll	29	12	41
Romaine Lettuce, chopped	½ c	0	38	38
Broccoli, cooked, boiled, drained	½ c	0	39	39
Corn, sweet, white, cooked, boiled, drained	½ c	0	38	38
Peanuts, all types, oil-roasted	1 oz.	0	36	36
Baked beans	½ cup	0	31	31
Strawberries	1 C. sliced	0	30	30
Peanut butter, chunky style	2 Tablespoon	0	29	29
English Walnuts	1 oz. (14 halves)	0	28	28
Cauliflower	½ cup	0	27	27
Egg, whole, raw, fresh	1 large	0	24	24
Peanut butter, smooth style	2 Tablespoon	0	24	24
Bananas, raw	1 medium 7"	0	22	22
Green snap beans, cooked, boiled, drained	½ cup	0	21	21
Bread, wheat	1 slice	9	10	19

Nutrient values source : USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard References, Release 15

Dietary Folate Equivalents (DFE's) is the unit of measure developed to account for the differences in absorption of synthetic folic acid and natural folate found in foods. The 1998 Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA's) for folate are expressed in DFE's.

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