



Wellness Clinic

Fox Army Health Center

January/February 2013

Prevent Birth Defects



Adequate folic acid intake is important for the prevention of birth defects. January 6 through 12th is National Folic Acid Awareness Week.

The first moment you look into your baby's eyes, you will probably feel both love and fear for your new responsibility. It is one of the strongest instincts of life, to protect your baby. But you don't have to wait until you see your baby for the first time. You can start taking care of your baby today. Even before you're pregnant.

The U.S. Public Health Service recommends that all women who could become pregnant get 400 micrograms (0.4 mg) of folic acid every day.

This could prevent up to 70 percent of some types of serious birth defects of the brain or spinal cord (spina bifida). But to do this, women need folic acid a month before they get pregnant through the first few weeks the baby is growing. That's why you should always get enough folic acid everyday . . .even if you're not planning a baby until next month, next year, or later.

Every woman needs folic acid every day, whether she's planning to get pregnant or not, for the healthy new cells the body makes daily. Think about the skin, hair, and nails. These – and other parts of the body – make new cells each day.

So how can a woman get enough folic acid?

Two easy ways to be sure to get enough folic acid include:

- 1. Eat right** - Folic acid has been added to some foods such as enriched breads, pastas, rice and cereals. Check the labels on your breakfast cereals; a few have 100 percent of the folic acid you need.
- 2. Take a vitamin** - Almost every multivitamin you can buy has all the folic acid you need. You can also buy vitamin pills made with only folic acid- they are small and easy to swallow.

Supplement Facts		
	Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value
Folic Acid	400 mcg	100%
Vitamin B12	6 mcg	100%
Pantothenic Acid	5 mg	50%
Calcium	450 mg	45%
Iron	18 mg	100%
Magnesium	50 mg	12%
Zinc	15 mg	100%

Birth defects affect 1 in every 33 babies born in the United States and are a leading cause of infant mortality. Babies who survive and live with birth defects are at increased risk for developing many lifelong physical, cognitive, and social challenges. Prevention is the key!

To learn more about folic acid and how to prevent birth defects, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/folicacid or call 1-800-232-4636 (CDC-INFO).

Federal Health Observances

January-
6-12 National Folic Acid Awareness Week
 Cervical Health Awareness Month
 National Glaucoma Awareness Month
 Thyroid Awareness Month

February-
1 National Wear Red Day
 American Heart Month
24 Feb-2 Mar National Eating Disorders Awareness Week
 National Children's Dental Health Month
 National Wise Health Consumer Month

Keep the Beat Going: Prevent Heart Disease

You can take steps today to lower your risk of heart disease and heart attack. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

To help prevent heart disease, you can:

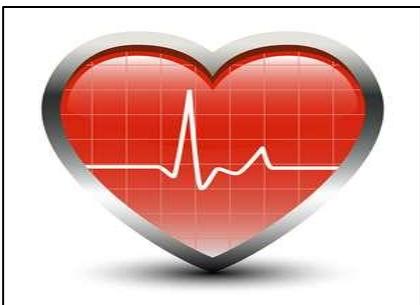
- Eat healthy and get active.
- Watch your weight.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation.
- Take steps to prevent type 2 diabetes.
- Manage stress.

You are at higher risk for heart disease if:

- You are a woman over age 55
- You are a man over age 45
- Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55
- Your mother or sister had heart disease before age 65

When people talk about heart disease, they are usually talking about coronary heart disease (CHD) or coronary artery disease (CAD), the most common type of heart disease.

When someone has CHD, the arteries that take blood to the heart are narrow or blocked. This happens when cholesterol and fatty material, called plaque, build up inside the arteries.



Plaque is caused by:

- Fat and cholesterol in the blood
 - High blood pressure
 - Smoking
 - Too much sugar in the blood (usually because of diabetes)
- When plaque blocks an artery, it's hard for blood to flow to the heart.

A blocked artery can cause chest pain or a heart attack. A heart attack happens when blood flow to the heart is blocked and parts of the heart muscle may die.



Signs of a Heart Attack:

1. Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back.
2. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
3. Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
4. Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.
5. As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.

If you have any of these signs, don't wait more than five minutes before calling for help. Call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.

Courtesy: www.heart.org

National Children's Dental Health Month

Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.



Want to avoid [cavities](#)? Brushing twice a day with toothpaste, flossing once a day, and limiting sugary snacks and beverages is how you do it. It's simple but sometimes life gets busy and you might be tempted to skip it. **Don't.** A bright smile makes you feel good inside and out. Make sure to see your dentist regularly, too.

Courtesy: www.ada.org

Prevent Cervical Cancer!

The American Cancer Society estimates in 2012, about **12,170** new cases of invasive cervical cancer will be diagnosed and **4,220** women will die from the disease.

Talk to your health care provider about the Gardasil vaccination for prevention of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) infection and the Pap Smear preventive health screening for prevention and early detection of this deadly disease.