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National Institutes of Health / National Library of Medicine



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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/folicacid.html>

Folic Acid

Also called: Folacin, Folate, Pteroylglutamic acid, Vitamin B9

Folic acid is a B vitamin [<https://medlineplus.gov/bvitamins.html>]. It helps the body make healthy new cells. Everyone needs folic acid. For women who may get pregnant, it is really important. Getting enough folic acid before and during pregnancy can prevent major birth defects [<https://medlineplus.gov/neuraltubedefects.html>] of her baby's brain or spine.


Foods with folic acid in them include:

- Leafy green vegetables
- Fruits
- Dried beans, peas, and nuts
- Enriched breads, cereals and other grain products


If you don't get enough folic acid from the foods you eat, you can also take it as a dietary supplement [<https://medlineplus.gov/dietarysupplements.html>].


NIH: National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements

Start Here



- [About Folic Acid \[https://www.cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/\]](https://www.cdc.gov/folic-acid/about/) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- [Folate \[https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Folate-Consumer/\]](https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Folate-Consumer/)
 (National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements)
Also in Spanish [<https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Folate-DatosEnEspanol/>]
- [Folate \(Folic Acid\) \[https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-folate/art-20364625?p=1\]](https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-folate/art-20364625?p=1)
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- [Folic Acid \[https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/folic-acid\]](https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/folic-acid)
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/folic-acid>]

Diagnosis and Tests


- [Homocysteine Test \[https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/homocysteine-test/\]](https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/homocysteine-test/)
 (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-homocisteina/>]

- **Vitamin B Test** [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/vitamin-b-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-vitamina-b/>]

Genetics

- **Cerebral folate transport deficiency: MedlinePlus Genetics**
[<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/cerebral-folate-transport-deficiency/>]
 (National Library of Medicine)
- **Hereditary folate malabsorption: MedlinePlus Genetics**
[<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/hereditary-folate-malabsorption/>]
 (National Library of Medicine)

Clinical Trials

- **ClinicalTrials.gov: Folic Acid Deficiency** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Folic+Acid+Deficiency%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- **Article: Breastfeeding and biomarkers of folate and cobalamin status in Norwegian infants:...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/39345251>]
- **Article: Microbially-produced folate forms support the growth of Roseburia intestinalis but not...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/39342101>]
- **Article: Exploring the Impact of Folic Acid Supplementation and Vitamin B12 Deficiency...**
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/39339794>]
- **Folic Acid -- see more articles** [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Folic+Acid+Deficiency%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Folic+Acid%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]
- **March of Dimes Foundation** [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://nacersano.marchofdimes.org/>]

Patient Handouts

- **Folate deficiency** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000354.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000354.htm>]
- **Folate-deficiency anemia** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000551.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000551.htm>]
- **Folic acid – test** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003686.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003686.htm>]
- **Folic acid in diet** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002408.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002408.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Folate deficiency [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000354.htm>]

Folate-deficiency anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000551.htm>]

Folic acid – test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003686.htm>]

Folic acid in diet [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002408.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Vitamins [<https://medlineplus.gov/vitamins.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Folic Acid* is the NIH Office of Dietary Supplements [<https://ods.od.nih.gov/>]

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