



Helping you to give your baby a healthy start

## Folic acid

"Folic acid, or folate, is a type of B vitamin that is important in the prevention of neural tube defects such as spina bifida and helps to ensure your baby's spine develops properly. Studies show that increasing your intake of folic acid at the time when your baby's spine is developing reduces the risk of neural tube defects. That's why you're advised to take 400mcg of folic acid ideally before you conceive, or from when you first find out you're pregnant.

Folic acid also aids cell division and the formation of red blood cells making it important throughout pregnancy to encourage the optimum growth of your baby. If you have any concerns about supplements, why not give our Careline a call on **08457 623 628**? Our nutritionist and feeding advisors will do their best to help you find the answers.

## Folic acid supplements

It would be very difficult to get the amount of folic acid needed to protect your baby from neural tube defects from your daily diet. Because of this, it's recommended that you take 400mcg of folic acid per day both before conception and up until the 12th week of your pregnancy and eat a folate-rich diet in addition.

Good sources:

- Granary or wholemeal bread
- Most fruits, especially oranges, grapefruit, blackberries and raspberries
- Parsnips, avocados, and leafy green vegetables
- Cooked black-eyed beans, baked beans, chickpeas and lentils
- Cereals which are fortified with folic acid
- Milk and yogurt
- Yeast or malt extracts (both spread and drinks)"