



A MINUTE OF HEALTH WITH CDC

You CAN Help Prevent Birth Defects

Trends in Folic Acid Supplement Intake Among Women of Reproductive Age – California 2002–2006

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This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

It's important for all women of child bearing age to get enough folic acid. Only about 1 out of 3 women actually get enough of the vitamin. Scientific studies have shown that a daily dose of 400 micrograms of folic acid can prevent more than half of neural tube defects that might otherwise occur. The neural tube, which becomes the brain and spinal cord, is one of the earliest structures to develop during pregnancy. Since about half of all pregnancies aren't planned, a woman may not know for a month or two that she's pregnant, which is why it's so important for all women of childbearing age to take folic acid every day. Researchers plan to keep studying folic acid to see if there is more that can be done to prevent neural tube defects in babies.

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