

Folic Acid Update

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

Summer 2005

Dear Folic Acid Advocates,

Thank you for promoting folic acid in your respective states and communities!

We welcome your comments and input. If you have any exciting folic acid activities planned, we would love to highlight them in an upcoming issue! Please contact us at Flo@cdc.gov.

North Carolina Spotlight

“Point 4 the Future” is a college-based folic acid campaign designed to increase the number of female students on college and university campuses throughout North Carolina who consume folic acid daily.

Peer educators and dining hall and campus media outlet partners make up the “Point 4 the Future” campus-based team at the approximately 65 college and university campuses that the program serves each year. In 2005, the program added “campus champions” to the team, recruiting members of campus health center staff to keep folic acid in the minds of campus health care providers.



Students who agree to participate in the project take a pretest to measure their folic acid knowledge and consumption. For this, they receive a free 3-month supply of multivitamins containing folic acid. About a month after the pretest, they are contacted for a posttest. Again, folic acid knowledge and consumption are measured. Results have shown an increase in folic acid awareness, knowledge, and multivitamin consumption behavior among program participants over the past 5 years.

The “Point 4 the Future” team works hard to sustain the program on campuses by recruiting college and university staff to help implement the program, integrating folic acid content into curricula, and recruiting students to serve on collegiate councils in which the folic acid message can continue to be disseminated.

“Point 4 the Future” has received funding from the March of Dimes, the North Carolina Folic Acid Council (NCFAC), and The University of North Carolina at Greensboro School of Nursing. For more information please contact Heidi Austin, Project Manager, by email at heaustin@uncg.edu, or by telephone at 336-256-1016.



Do you order materials from the CDC Folic Acid Materials Clearinghouse?

CDC is in the process of reviewing and updating the materials that are available through its Clearinghouse and would like general feedback about which items our partners and constituents like and use the most. Please email flo@cdc.gov if you have any general feedback about the materials that CDC currently offers, or about what you would like to see being offered in the future.

Please go to the [CDC Clearinghouse](#) website to view current offerings, or to place an order for materials you might want to use during your next event or campaign.

New Programs and Materials

Preconceptional eHealth Education Programs

NCBDDD's preconceptional health message programs, *Pregnancy Planning: What To Know About Your Health Before You Get Pregnant* and *Healthy Living: How Women Of Childbearing Age Can Get And Stay Healthy*, are now available in the Education Programs section of the free Interactive Health Record service at www.ihealthrecord.org.

CDC and other federal agencies and medical societies have developed email-based education programs that are offered through the Interactive Health Record (iHealthRecord), located online at www.ihealthrecord.org. The iHealthRecord was developed and is managed by Medem, a secure patient-physician communication network that is sponsored by the American Medical Association, and other U.S. professional medical societies and organizations. The iHealthrecord is not a part of CDC or any other federal agency.

You can sign up for CDC's preconceptional eHealth education programs by

1. Logging on to www.ihealthrecord.org.
2. Signing up for a free iHealthRecord.
3. Going to the "Education Programs" page.
4. Checking the box next to "Pregnancy Planning: What To Know About Your Health Before You Get Pregnant", or next to "Healthy Living: How Women Of Childbearing Age Can Get And Stay Healthy." depending on which program you would like to receive.

If you would like to see a copy of the information CDC contributed to the iHealthRecord preconception eHealth education program or learn more about this education method, please contact Elizabeth Fassett at eff8@cdc.gov, or Katie Kilker at kpk9@cdc.gov.



Brochure for Postpartum Women

The NTD & Folic Acid Workgroup of the National Birth Defects Prevention Network is currently working on a new folic acid material targeted for postpartum women. This material will be tested with English and Spanish-speaking women from mid to late summer 2005. The workgroup hopes to have this material available for distribution in late 2005. To learn more about the brochure or the development and testing process, please contact Kay Pearson at the Oklahoma Department of Health at KayP@health.ok.gov.

Fact Card for Adolescents

CDC's has been working hard to fulfill your requests for a folic acid educational material for an adolescent audience. The new fact card, entitled "B Your Best with Folic Acid," has been developed and tested with young students in grades 5 through 8. The card has just entered the clearance processes at CDC and HHS, and the Prevention Research Team is hopeful that it will be available by the end of this year. If you have questions about the new material or would like to view a draft of the card, contact Katie Kilker at kpk9@cdc.gov



National Folic Acid Awareness Week January 9-15, 2006

With your help, last year's inaugural Awareness Week observance, "Folic Acid: You Don't Know What You're Missing!" was a success. Partners distributed all 15,000 awareness week materials, and the national education teleconference reached 2,300 health care providers in 43 states. The second annual National Folic Acid Awareness week is scheduled for January 9-15, 2006 – so start planning your events and activities now!

For more information about National Folic Acid Awareness Week, and to keep up to date on events that the NCFCA is planning, go to <http://www.folicacidinfo.org/campaign>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2005

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
[Reproductive Health 2005 \(9/7-9/10\)](#)

National Association of Neonatal Nurses
[NANN 21st Annual Conference: Tiny Babies, Big Dreams \(9/28-10/1\)](#)

National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

[NPWH 8th Annual Conference: Women's Health Care in the New Millennium \(9/28-10/1\)](#)

OCTOBER 2005

American Society for Reproductive Medicine

[Reproductive Medicine 2005: Expanding the Borders and Meeting New Challenges \(10/15-19/10/19\)](#)

American College of Nurse Practitioners

[2005 National Clinical Conference \(10/19-10/23\)](#)

American Dietetic Association [ADA Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo \(10/22-10/25\)](#)

National Perinatal Association

[The Art and Science of Perinatal Care: Practical Solutions to Improve Outcomes \(10/27-10/29\)](#)

NOVEMBER 2005

National Society of Genetic Counselors

[24th Annual Education Conference \(11/12-11/15\)](#)

SELECTED NEW RESEARCH

- ❖ Cornel MC, Smith DJ, de Jong-van den Berg LT. Folic acid-the scientific debate as a base for public health policy. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2005;20:411-5.
- ❖ Durga J, van Boxtel M, Schouten EG, Kok FJ, Jolles J, Katan MB, et al.. Effect of lowering of homocysteine levels on inflammatory markers: a randomized controlled trial. *Arch Intern Med.* 2005;165:1388-94.
- ❖ Greene MF, Solomon CG. Gestational diabetes mellitus – time to treat. *N Engl J Med.* 2005; 352:2544-5.
- ❖ Hashimi SS, Waller DK, Langolois P, Canfield M, Hecht JT. Prevalence of nonsyndromic oral clefts in Texas: 1995-1999. *Am J Med Genet.* 2005;143:368-72.
- ❖ Muskiet, FA. The importance of (early) folate status to primary and secondary coronary artery disease prevention. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2005;20:403-10.
- ❖ Pinto X, Vilaseca MA, Balcells S, Artuch R, Corbella E, Meco JF, et al. A folate-rich diet is as effective as folic acid from supplements in decreasing plasma homocysteine concentrations. *Int J Med Sci.* 2005;2:58-63.
- ❖ Tawakol A, Migrino RQ, Aziz KS, Waitkowska J, Homvang G, Alpert NM, et al. High-dose folic acid acutely improves coronary vasodilator function in patients with coronary artery disease. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2005;45:1580-4.

- ❖ Than LC, Honein MA, Watkins ML, Yoon PW, Daniel KL, Correa A. Intent to become pregnant as a predictor of exposures during pregnancy: Is there a relation? J Reprod Med 2005; 50:389-396.
- ❖ Tseng M, Hernandez T. Comparison of intakes of U.S. Chinese women based on food frequency and 24-hour recall data. J Am Diet Assoc. 2005;105:1145-8.

Birth Defects Listserv

You can receive a list of new published folic acid research bimonthly by joining the birth defects listserv. To join, send the following email:

To: listserv@listserv.cdc.gov
Subject: (leave blank)
Message: subscribe birth-defects-surv

If successful, you will get an e-mail reply saying that you are subscribed with further details and instructions for use.

When you send messages to the listserv, it's a good idea to receive confirmation of your messages.

To have the entire message sent back to you whenever you send a message, send the following e-mail (you need to send this only once, after you join the listserv, not every time you send a message):

To: listserv@listserv.cdc.gov
Subject: (leave blank)
Message: set birth-defects-surv repro