

# PRE-PREGNANCY VITAMIN USE

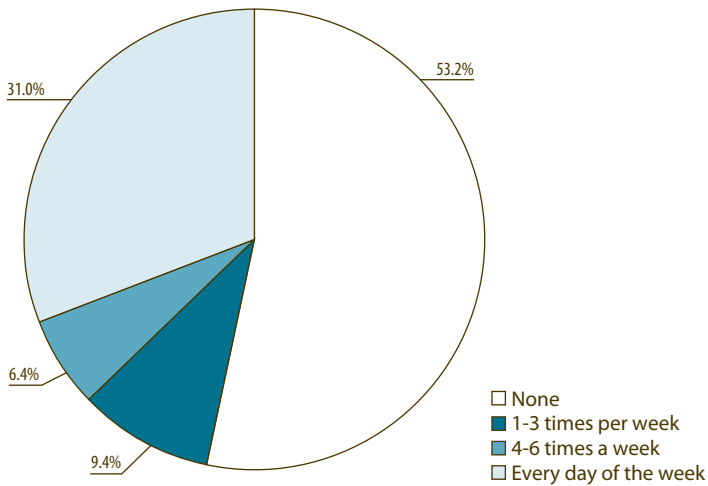
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Neural tube defects affect about 3,000 pregnancies in the U.S. each year. Neural tube defects include spina bifida (open spine) and anencephaly (open skull) and are among the most common birth defects that contribute to perinatal mortality, infant mortality, and disability.<sup>17</sup> The consumption of vitamin supplements containing folic acid before conception and during the first trimester of pregnancy can reduce the occurrence of neural tube defects by 50–70 percent.<sup>18</sup> Since half of U.S. pregnancies are unplanned and these birth defects occur very early in pregnancy, the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that all women of childbearing age consume 400 micrograms of folic acid per day<sup>18</sup> (which is contained in most multivitamins).

- More than half (53.2 percent) of Oregon women who had a baby in 2004 had not taken multivitamins during the month before they became pregnant. Just over one-third (37.4 percent) reported they had taken either multivitamins or prenatal vitamins four or more times per week.
- Asian/Pacific Islander women were most likely to report regular multivitamin use (4 or more times per week) during the month before they became pregnant (45.0 percent).
- American Indian/Alaska Native women were least likely to report regular multivitamin use during the month before they became pregnant (24.6 percent).
- As maternal age increased, the prevalence of taking a multivitamin significantly increased. Women under 20 years of age were significantly less likely than all other age groups to take a multivitamin at least 4 times per week.

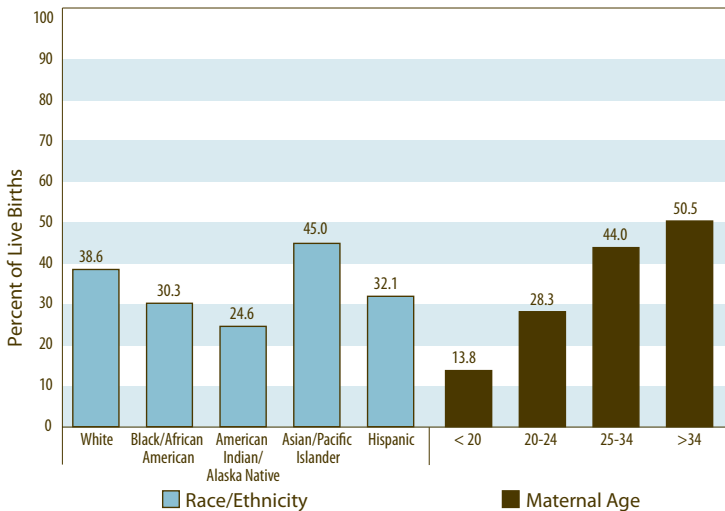
# CHAPTER 3: PERINATAL HEALTH

## Pre-pregnancy Vitamin Use, Oregon, 2004



Data Source: Oregon Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

## Pre-pregnancy Vitamin Use ( $\geq 4$ times/week) by Race/Ethnicity & Age, Oregon, 2004



Data Source: Oregon Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)