

FOLIC ACID and VITAMIN D GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

FOLIC ACID AND NEURAL TUBE DEFECTS (NTDs)

Baseline for ALL women who could become pregnant

- Advise women that they can purchase Folic Acid (400 mcg daily) over the counter **OR**
- Prescribe 400mcg daily Folic Acid
- **Duration: from 12 weeks before conception to 12 weeks pregnant**

A woman is AT HIGHER RISK of having a baby with a Neural Tube Defect (NTD) affected pregnancy if one or more of the following apply:

- There is a **family history of NTDs** (woman or father's family)
- She has **diabetes**
- She is taking **anti-epileptic drugs*** (for any indication)
- She has a **BMI > 30**
- She has **coeliac disease**
- She has **thalassaemia**

For women AT HIGHER RISK of having a baby with an NTD

- **Prescribe 5mg** daily Folic Acid (prescription-only dosage)
- **Duration: from 12 weeks before conception to 12 weeks pregnant**

***50% of women on anti-epilepsy drugs are prescribed them for non-epileptic conditions**

VITAMIN D – RDA 10mcg a day

In summer, most people get enough vitamin D from sunlight. Between October and March a 10mcg supplement of vitamin D per day for pregnant/breastfeeding women should be encouraged. (People who cover their skin for cultural reasons, those confined indoors or with dark skin should take a daily supplement of vitamin D throughout the year.)