

.....

Did You Know . . .

- that orange juice with calcium added to it has as much calcium as a glass of milk and gives your body folic acid, too?
- that getting enough folic acid before you become pregnant can help prevent birth defects?
- that taking a half-hour walk each day can help you maintain your weight?
- that the word “folic” comes from “foliage” for the leaves of plants that contain folic acid, like greens, spinach, and kale?



Oregon Health Division
(503) 731-4021
November 2000

If you need this brochure in an alternate format, please call (503) 731-4021.

.....

.....

4

**Things
You
Should Know
About
Nutrition
&
Birth Control**

.....

Good nutrition *and* a safe birth control method are both important to a woman’s health.

..... **How Much Do You Know?**

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. To prevent weight gain, daily activity and this are recommended. | a. iron |
| 2. To help prevent birth defects, all women should take a multiple vitamin containing this before they become pregnant. | b. pinto beans |
| 3. Milk, cheese, and yogurt contain . . . | c. foods high in vitamin C |
| 4. When there is not enough of this in the blood, a person may feel tired or weak. | d. orange juice |
| 5. A good source of folic acid is . . . | e. low-fat diet |
| 6. Non-dairy sources of calcium include . . . | f. calcium |
| 7. To help absorb iron into your blood, you should eat this with iron-rich foods. | g. folic acid |

..... **Answer Key**

- | | |
|------|-------------------------|
| 4. a | 7. c |
| 3. f | fortified |
| 2. g | 6. b, and d if calcium- |
| 1. e | 5. b, d |
-

4 Things about Nutrition and Birth Control You Should Know . . .

1 Folic Acid

Folic acid is a vitamin that your body needs daily. Folic acid is also called folate and folacin. Many women do not eat enough foods with folic acid and do not get the amount of folic acid that their bodies need. *If you are low in folic acid and become pregnant, your baby could be born with a birth defect.*

To make sure that you get enough folic acid:

- Take a multiple vitamin with 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily.
- Eat cereals fortified with folic acid, like Product 19, Total, Total Raisin Bran, and Smart Start.
- Eat beans, like pinto beans, navy beans, black-eyed peas, and lentils.
- Eat green vegetables, like spinach, turnip greens, broccoli, okra, and green peas.
- Drink orange, grapefruit, or pineapple juice.

3 Iron Deficiency Anemia

Many women are at risk for iron deficiency anemia. Iron is stored in the blood, and when blood leaves the body (for example, during your period), the iron must be replaced by high iron foods. Without enough iron, your body may feel tired or weak.

To help prevent iron deficiency anemia:

- Eat enough servings of high iron foods from the Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Food Group of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Eat foods high in vitamin C at the same time you eat an iron-rich food. Vitamin C helps your body use the iron. For vitamin C, try oranges, grapefruit, broccoli, mangoes, spinach, kiwis, and berries.
- Eat greens like mustard greens, turnip greens, spinach, and kale.
- Eat raisins, dried apricots, and prunes.

2 Calcium

Eating a poor diet and using some forms of birth control, such as Depo Provera, may cause the amount of calcium stored in your bones to decrease. This can cause your bones to become thin and more likely to break. Getting enough calcium in your diet helps keep your bones strong.

To make sure you get enough calcium in your diet:

- Eat foods high in calcium, like milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Eat other calcium-rich foods, like pinto beans, broccoli, almonds, corn tortillas, mustard greens, turnip greens, tofu set with calcium, bok choy, kale, and calcium-fortified soy milk.
- Drink calcium-fortified orange juice. (Calcium-fortified means that calcium has been added to the orange juice. The label **must** state that calcium has been added.)

4 Weight Gain

Some hormonal methods of birth control may cause you to gain weight more easily. It is important to try to stay at a healthy weight. Weight gain should not be a problem if you follow the tips listed here.

Tips to prevent weight gain:

- Choose foods low in fat and sugar most often . . . 1% or nonfat milk instead of whole milk, pretzels instead of chips, diet soft drinks in place of regular soft drinks, baked or grilled foods instead of fried foods.
- Eat whole wheat bread, rice, pasta, and plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Enjoy some type of physical activity 5 or more times per week, such as taking a walk, working in the yard, moving to music.
- Eat 3 meals and 1-2 healthy snacks each day.