

# YOU, YOUR BABY AND VITAMINS

Department of Health (DoH) advice is that you take certain minerals and vitamins whilst pregnant and breastfeeding. These are to help the development of your child.

This sheet will provide information to help you understand what you need and why.

We've also included some advice to help choose between the brands.

Unfortunately, multi-vitamin supplements are not currently available on prescription.

## FOLIC ACID-

This is especially important in the first 3 months of pregnancy but can be taken throughout pregnancy. It helps to prevent 'neural tube defects', which are problems with the development of the spinal cord, for example, Spina Bifida.

For most women, the DoH recommend you take **400 mcg a day** from conception.

It is advised that you take **this in the form of a supplement in addition to folate rich food such as fortified cereals and green vegetables**. If you or your partner have a history of neural tube defects, or if you have diabetes, see your GP who will prescribe you a higher dose of Folic Acid.

## VITAMIN D-

This is important for the development of your infants' bones. During pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding, babies get their vitamin D from your supply. It is recommended that you take **10mcg additional supplement throughout pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding**. It will help fetal bone development and prevent childhood bone diseases such as Rickets.

## IRON-

Iron affects your blood's capability to carry oxygen and improves your energy levels. It is recommended you get 14.8mg per day. Most people get enough iron in their food if they eat a healthy balanced diet. If you are found to be anaemic you may be asked to take supplements containing higher levels. This is safe to use during pregnancy and breastfeeding

## CALCIUM-

Is important for bone growth and strengthening. A total daily intake of 700mg is recommended. Many people get enough through healthy diet but most pregnancy multivitamins contain some calcium to help keep your levels high enough during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

## DIFFERENT FORMULAS-

Here is the breakdown of the most commonly used supplements with a guide of their content and price to help you decide which to choose.

Name	Vitamin D	Folic Acid	Cost (RRP in February 2013)
<b>UK DoH GUIDELINES</b>	<b>10mcg</b>	<b>400mcg</b>	
PregnaCare Original	10mcg	400mcg	90 tablets for £11.69 = 13p per day
PregnaCare Max	10mcg	400mcg	84 tablets for £19.99 Take two daily=48p per day
Centrum Pregnancy Care	5mcg	400mcg	30 tablets for £5.99 = 20p per day
Sanatogen Mother To Be	10mcg	400mcg	90 tablets for £11.59 = 13p per day
Sainsbury's Pregnancy Plus	10mcg	400mcg	30 tablets for £5.00= 17p per day
Boots Pregnancy Support	10mcg	400mcg	30 tablets for £4.29 = 14p per day
Healthy Start (adult vitamins)	10mcg	400mcg	56 tablets for £0.91= 1p per day

## HEALTHY START VITAMINS

Some women are entitled to free 'Healthy Start' Vitamins.

If you are; at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4 and receive any of the following; Income support, jobseeker's allowance, Income-related employment and support allowance, Child tax credit with an annual family income less than £16,190, or any woman under 18years old and pregnant- you are entitled to free vitamins.

Please discuss this with your midwife who will help you claim your vouchers or visit the Healthy Start website at [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk) for further information.

Alternatively they can be bought locally from Chapel Road Health Clinic or the Meadway Health Centre.

