



Health Hint article by David Coory

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Folic Acid, a vitally important B vitamin

I have been surprised at the public opposition to the adding of Folate (Folic Acid) to bread.

I am generally opposed to 'mass medication' but knowing the widespread lack of Folate in our New Zealand diet, and its vital importance, I can see merit in this move.

Folate is a yellow B vitamin (B9) and is essential for women to bear healthy, newborn babies. Lack of Folate before and during pregnancy is firmly linked with toxemia, miscarriage, mental retardation, Spina bifida and cleft palate.

However Folate is also critical for adult

male and female brain and artery health, and for bowel cancer protection. A large American study found that adequate Folate reduced the incidence of bowel cancer a massive 75%.

Low levels of Folate are also found in heart attack victims, arthritics, alcoholics, backward children, depressed people, psychiatric patients, and those suffering from Alzheimers.

Because of these findings, American health authorities now require white flour to be fortified with this vitamin. (Flour naturally contains some Folate.) This has proved successful in reducing deficiencies.

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