

Patient Information Leaflet

Vitamin D and Folic Acid Supplementation in Pregnancy and whilst Breastfeeding

Taking Folic Acid during the first trimester of pregnancy reduces the risk of the child developing a neural tube defect.

Taking Vitamin D supplements during pregnancy helps with muscle and bone development, giving babies the best start in life.

All women should take Vitamin D supplementation throughout pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding.

All women should take Folic Acid supplementation, before conception and until week 12 of pregnancy. If you are at a higher risk of conceiving a child with a neural tube defect you will be advised to take a higher daily dose. Your doctor will need to prescribe this higher dose.

Vitamin D and Folic Acid supplements can be brought from many pharmacies, supermarkets and health food shops. 'Healthy Start Vitamins for Women' tablets are available at low cost from all Children's Centre's in Sheffield. They are free to certain groups under the extended Sheffield Healthy Start Scheme.

The recommended daily dose / preparations for you are:

Folic Acid 400 micrograms daily until at least week 12 of pregnancy

Folic Acid 5mg tablets (if this strength is needed this will be provided on a prescription from your GP)

Vitamin D 400 units / 10 micrograms daily whilst pregnant and breast feeding

A preparation containing between 20 and 25 micrograms (800 - 1,000 units) of Vitamin D daily

Healthy Start Vitamins for Women (tablet contains 400 micrograms of Folic Acid and 400 units / 10 micrograms of Vitamin D) - these are designed to be taken at preconception, throughout pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding.

