



## I'm pregnant. What should I be supplementing with?

By Dr. Cecilia de Martino, ND  
Naturopathic Doctor

### Folic Acid

Now most people by now know that folic acid is the number one prescribed nutrient when a woman is pregnant. Folic acid has been shown to reduce neural tube defects in a fetus. This would include defects of the spinal cord such as spina bifida. Often this imperfection can occur very early on in pregnancy. For this reason it is important that women who are considering to get pregnant should supplement with folic acid. There is however, an increase in babies born with tongue tie. Tongue tie is when the baby's tongue is attached too closely the bottom or back of the mouth making it difficult for them to breastfeed. It seems that this may be the case in those that have a genetic defect in properly utilizing folic acid. There is no way of knowing if this is you without a genetic test. Therefore, it is advisable to be taking the active form of folic acid, Methyl-Tetra-Hydro-Folate (MTHF). Most standard prenatsals contain only folic acid and not MTHF. I always recommend a supplement that has the active folate in it.



### To Book an Appointment

By Email:

info@sellarswellness.com

By Phone:

519-208-6900



### Clinic Hours

Monday: 8 am – 8 pm

Tuesday: 8 am – 8 pm

Wednesday: 8 am – 8 pm

Thursday: 8 am – 8 pm

Friday: 8 am – 6 pm

\*\*Practitioner hours vary

\*\*Reception is available 9 am – 12 pm and 3 pm – 6 pm daily with exception to Friday 9 am – 12 pm only

### Common Prenatals

The most common prenatsals that physicians prescribe are Materna and Preg Vit. My biggest beef with these supplements are the non-medicinal ingredients. If you read the label you'll notice things like "FD&C Red No. 40 aluminum lake, polysorbate 80, sodium lauryl sulfate, titanium dioxide, lactose..." These are fillers and aren't ingredients we want to consume even in small amounts. Also, the amounts of the vitamins and minerals in them are too low. Not to mention the form of the vitamins aren't their most absorbable forms. For example, you want methylcobalamine for B12 not cyanocobalamine.

### Vitamin K2



Vitamin K is commonly known as a clotting vitamin. In reality this is vitamin K1. Vitamin K2 doesn't operate the same way. It actually moves calcium into the bones and is critical for the development of teeth and bones in the fetus. This is a vitamin that I strongly recommend to all pregnant women. The type of vitamin K2 that you must look for is MK7, not MK4 because MK7 is much better absorbed and you need much less of it to have the same effect.

### Fish oil

Fish oil or omega 3 is important for proper brain development. Specifically there are 2 types of omega 3 that have the biggest health effects. These are EPA and DHA. When you are pregnant, you want to focus on the DHA component as this is the omega 3 that is involved in proper brain development. EPA has a greater affinity for the heart. Make sure you are taking enough omega 3 especially while pregnant.



### Probiotics

Maternal intake of probiotics protects against allergic diseases in children such as **atopic dermatitis**. Please note that *Yogurt often contains sugars and fillers such as gelatin and starches and they don't label exactly what kind of probiotic strains are in them and how much is in there.*

### Vitamin D



The role of vitamin D in **bone** growth, both in utero and after birth has been well assessed. Vitamin D also plays a role in the **immune system**, which may have implications in the development of asthma, wheezing, allergic rhinitis and type 1 diabetes. Inadequate vitamin D levels may make the offspring more susceptible to respiratory disease.

I always recommend that vitamin D levels in the blood are checked. This allows for more accurate dose prescribing. Vitamin D testing is generally not covered by OHIP but you can pay privately for it and runs at about \$35-\$40 through your medical doctor.

The above list of nutrients is by no means exhaustive as there are others that are also important in pregnancy such as iodine, calcium, magnesium, zinc and iron. If you are pregnant or are thinking of getting pregnant, please book in with me so that I can make sure you are getting enough of the most critical nutrients for you and the baby.

Speaking of pregnancy, I would like to announce that I will be having a baby in July. I have a locum that will be taking over my patient care starting in July for up to 6 months. Please ask myself or Mai Lee for more details. [cecilia@drcecilia.ca](mailto:cecilia@drcecilia.ca)