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Folic Acid Deficiency

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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- I. **The client/caregiver can define folic acid deficiency.**
 - A. It is a decrease in red blood cells caused by folate deficiency.
 - B. It can result from
 - Poor dietary intake of folic acid
 - Malabsorption diseases such as celiac disease
 - Some medications
 - Increased need for folic acid during pregnancy
 - C. Additional risk factors include
 - Poor diet (frequently seen in older or poor populations)
 - Alcoholism

- II. **The client/caregiver can list signs and symptoms of this disease.**
 - A. Fatigue
 - B. Headache
 - C. Sore mouth and tongue
 - D. Pallor (paleness)

- III. **The client/caregiver can list measures used to treat folic acid deficiency.**
 - A. Replacement therapy may used on a short-term basis or may be lifelong.
 - B. Dietary treatment uses increased intake of green, leafy vegetables and citrus fruits.

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- IV. **The client/caregiver can discuss complications of untreated folate deficiency.**
 - A. In a pregnant woman, this deficiency has been associated with neural tube or spinal defects such as spina bifida in the infant.

RESOURCES

March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.com

National Institutes of Health (folic acid facts)
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/folicacid

REFERENCES

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Cohen, B. J., & Taylor, J. J. (2005). *Memmler's the human body in health and disease* (10th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Folic Acid IQ (March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation). www.marchofdimes.com/pnhec/1808_1945.asp.

Folic Acid Quiz (National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities). www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/quiz.htm.

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