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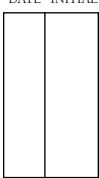
# Folic Acid Deficiency

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_

Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

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- I. The client/caregiver can define folic acid deficiency.
- It is a decrease in red blood cells caused by folate deficiency.
  - 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
  - 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.
- Fatigue
  - Headache
  - Sore mouth and tongue
  - Pallor (paleness)
- III. The client/caregiver can list measures used to treat folic acid deficiency.
- Replacement therapy may be used on a short-term basis or may be lifelong.
  - Dietary treatment uses increased intake of green, leafy vegetables and citrus fruits.



- IV. The client/caregiver can discuss complications of untreated folate deficiency.
- 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](http://www.marchofdimes.com)

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

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[www.marchofdimes.com/pnhec/1808\\_1945.asp](http://www.marchofdimes.com/pnhec/1808_1945.asp).
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