

## Folic Acid Fortification

### What's the difference between "Folate" and "Folic Acid"?

The terms 'Folate' and 'Folic acid' are often used interchangeably, however they are not the same:

- The term folate really encompasses a group of nutrients that are all different types of folates. They belong to the B vitamin family group, otherwise known as B9.
- Dihydrofolate is the form of folate that is found in food sources, such as green leafy vegetables.
- This food form of folate is then metabolised into tetrahydrofolate, the main form of folate which can enter the folate metabolic cycle.
- Finally, the body converts these forms down into methylfolate – the most active and potent form of folate.

On the other hand:

- Folic Acid is an oxidised, synthetic compound used in dietary supplements and food fortification that does not occur naturally.

### What foods are fortified with folic acid?

- Since 2009, The 'Mandatory Folic Acid Fortification Standard' requires that all wheat flour used for making bread, (**except organic wheat flour**), must be fortified with folic acid.
- 2-3mg of folic acid is added per kg of wheat flour.

Therefore, with the exception of organic flours, all breads containing wheat flour will have the mandatory addition of folic acid such as:

- Plain white, white high fibre, wholemeal and multigrain bread loaves, buns and rolls
- Yeast-containing flat breads (e.g. pita bread, naan bread)
- Focaccia and pide (Turkish bread)
- Bagels (white, wholemeal, sweet)
- Topped breads, buns and rolls (e.g. cheese and bacon rolls)
- Baked English-style muffins (white, white high fibre, multigrain, wholemeal and fruit)

### What about other flours?

Organic wheat flour and breads made from non-wheat flours, such rice, corn or rye are not required to contain folic acid. However, manufacturers may choose to add it if they wish. If they choose to add it, they must list folic acid on their ingredient label.

### Bread and Folic Acid Fortification

Bakeries which use flour fortified with folic acid (ie. **Avoid**):

- All wheat flour containing breads in the supermarket (eg. In house supermarket bakery, Buerger's bread, Helga's, Wonderwhite etc...)
- All Baker's Delight Bread
- Bowan Island Bread (Thomas Dux)

Bread/Bakeries which **don't use folic acid** fortified bread:

- Bread made from organic flour where folic acid is not listed in the ingredients list (eg. Breads available from health food stores: Naturis, Ancient Grains, Dovedale).

- Sonoma Bread ([www.sonoma.com.au](http://www.sonoma.com.au)) (Sold at Antico's Northbridge, Delicatessens, Thomas Dux, other special food retailers).
- Organic Bread from St Malo's Bakery (83 Willoughby Road, Crows Nest)
- Britt's Organic Bakery Products (About Life, Cammeray)
- SOME Brasseriebread ([www.brasseriebread.com.au](http://www.brasseriebread.com.au)) including all the sourdoughs (batard, bakers round, single origins, quinoa soya, harvest grain) Wholemeal & rye (artisan wholemeal, French mountain bread, NY rye, rye loaf) & Baguettes

### **Read the Ingredients List!**

If a food has been fortified with folic acid, manufacturers are required to list folic acid on the ingredient list. Sometimes it is mistakenly listed as 'folate'. Unpackaged bread (eg. Bread bought from a bakery or Baker's Delight) may not have ingredient labels. They should have this information available on request.

### **Disclaimer:**

The information presented here is accurate at the time, however we have no power over manufacturers that at any time may decide to use folic acid in their products, that is at this time not doing so, therefore it is up to the consumer to ensure through their own due diligence that whatever products they choose to use, that they ensure they know what they are and are not getting. Use the above information at your own risk.