

OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING FOLATE INTAKES OF WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE AND PREVENTING NEURAL TUBE DEFECTS

ADVICE FROM DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON VITAMIN B12 AND FOLIC ACID SUPPLEMENTATION

1. The Department will continue to monitor the vitamin B12 status of the wider population to track known problems and identify emerging issues.
2. The Department of Health, through communications from the Chief Medical Officer, can alert all health professionals to the likely risk of vitamin B12 deficiency being masked should mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid be introduced. This will raise awareness amongst health professionals of the possibility of vitamin B12 deficiency particularly, in older age groups, and heighten their vigilance.
3. The Department of Health will continue to promote folic acid supplementation in women of child-bearing age.
4. The Department of Health will coordinate with other UK Health Departments once it has received SACN advice.