Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

Multivitamin And Folic Acid Consumption

Introduction

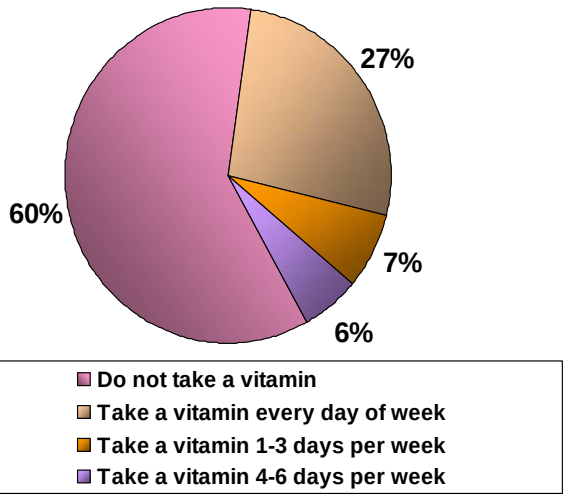
The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is an ongoing surveillance system of maternal behavior and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy.[1] This population-based survey is designed to collect data on maternal health and behavior, prenatal and postpartum care, and infant health. The 2008 Florida PRAMS survey had a total of 2,624 respondents. The data presented in this fact sheet are weighted to be representative of new mothers and newborns in Florida.

Background

Folic acid, also known as vitamin B_9, helps a baby's neural tube, the part of the developing baby that becomes the brain and spinal cord, develop properly. Research shows that 50%-70% of neural tube defects may be avoided by daily folic acid supplementation before conception.[2] U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all women of childbearing age consume a multivitamin containing 400 micrograms (mg) of folic acid every day.

The national Healthy People 2020 target is for 33% of females capable of becoming pregnant to consume 400 mg of folic acid daily through supplements in the month prior to pregnancy.

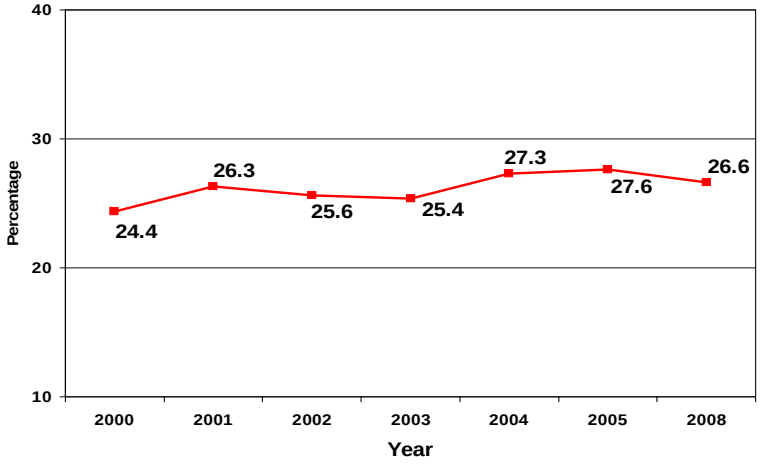
Figure 1. Multivitamin Consumption Prior To Pregnancy, Florida, 2008



Results

- Among Florida women with a live birth in 2008, 27% took a daily multivitamin or prenatal vitamin prior to conception (Figure 1), and 60% of women did not take a preconception vitamin.
- The percentage of women with a recent live birth who report taking a multivitamin containing folic acid every day the month before they become pregnant increased from 24.4% in 2000 (C.I. 21.5–27.3) to 26.6% in 2008 (C.I. 23.9–29.4) (Figure 2). This change is not statistically significant and falls below the Healthy People 2020 target of 33%.

Figure 2. Percent of Women with A Recent Live Birth Who Reported Taking A Multivitamin containing Folic Acid Every Day (One Month Before Becoming Pregnant), FL, 2004-2008



Florida Department of Health
Division of Disease Control, Bureau of Epidemiology
Chronic Disease Epidemiology

Multivitamin And Folic Acid Consumption

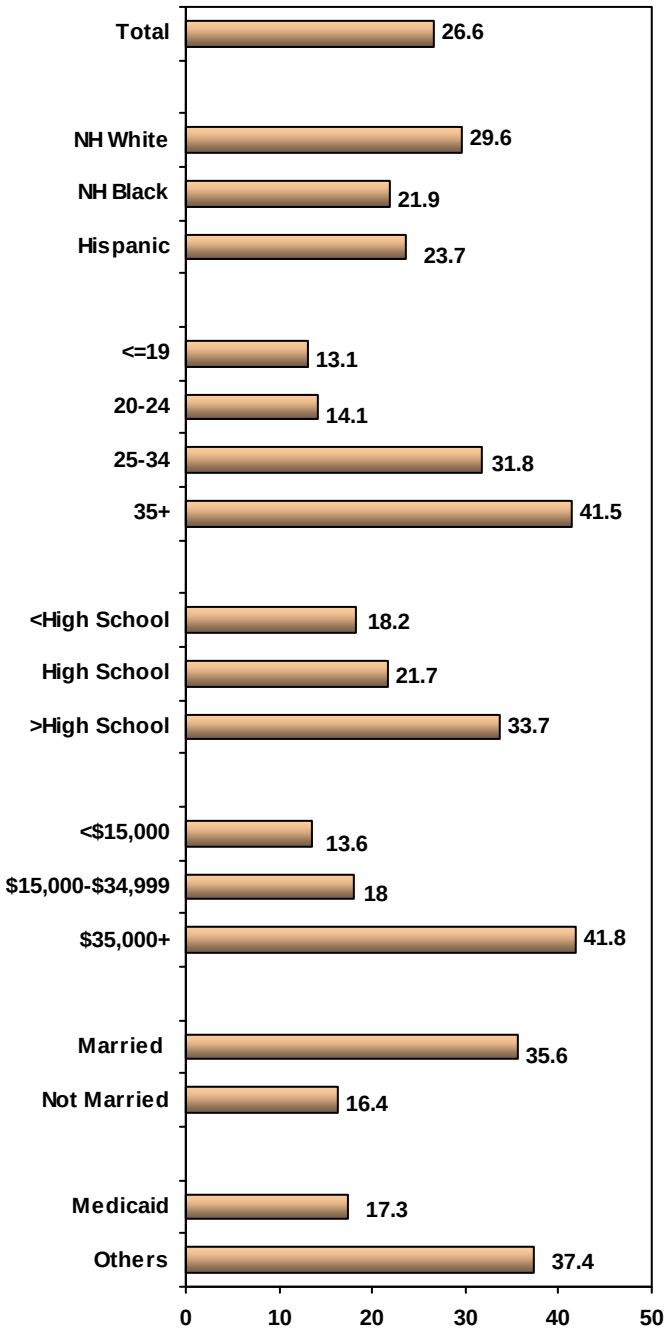
- Daily use of a multivitamin containing folic acid before pregnancy increases with maternal age (Figure 3). Compared to mothers age 25–34 years (31.8%) and mothers age 35 years and older (41.5%), mothers under age 20 years are substantially less likely to report taking a multivitamin containing folic acid every day before pregnancy (13.1%).

- Mothers with more than a high school education are significantly more likely to report taking a multivitamin containing folic acid every day before pregnancy (33.7%), compared to mothers with a high school education or less.

The prevalence of consuming a multivitamin containing folic acid every day before pregnancy is also:

- Significantly higher among mothers with an annual family income of $35,000 per year compared to mothers with a family income of less than $35,000.
- Significantly higher among married mothers compared to their unmarried counterparts.
- Significantly higher among mothers without Medicaid compared to mothers with Medicaid. (Figure 3)

Figure 3. Prevalence of Mothers Who Take A Daily Multivitamin Before Pregnancy By Demographic Characteristics, Florida, 2008



Summary

- Only 26.6% of mothers report taking a multivitamin containing folic acid every day one month before becoming pregnant.

- The prevalence of taking a multivitamin containing folic acid every day before pregnancy is significantly higher among mothers age 25 years and older, mothers with more than a high school education, mothers with an annual family income of $35,000 or more, married mothers, and mothers without Medicaid.

This publication was made possible by grant number 5UR6DP000541-04 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information, please contact:
Division of Disease Control
Bureau of Epidemiology
4052 Bald Cypress Way Bin A-12
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1720
850-245-4401
www.floridachronicdisease.org

Selected Citations

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitor System Data.* Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007.
2. Pitkin R. Folate and neural tube defects. Am J Clin Nutr 2007; 85:28S-8S.