

MTHFR 101

YOUR ROADMAP FOR LIVING
WITH AN MTHFR MUTATION



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WHAT TO EAT IF YOU HAVE AN MTHFR MUTATION

This is a sample chapter from the digital guide
'MTHFR 101: YOUR ROADMAP FOR LIVING WITH
AN MTHFR MUTATION'.

To purchase the complete guide visit:

<https://www.vip.dietvsdisease.org/mthfr-101-roadmap2jez655t>

CHAPTER 10

DIETARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN MTHFR MUTATION

The importance of folate cannot be overstated.

That is why MTHFR mutations warrant concern in the first place.

While more folic acid (often a *synthetic* vitamin B9 compound) is **not** desirable, more folate (*natural* vitamin B9 compounds) certainly is.

This is especially true for those with an MTHFR defect as folate-rich foods naturally contain the active form of folate too.

Additionally, more folate in the diet means more opportunities to create the active form. The more lottery tickets you buy, the more opportunities you have to win the lottery.

The body easily recycles leftover folate into a harmless compound, whereas it cannot always do so with folic acid. Without getting into more chemistry, that is why folic acid can easily accumulate in the blood ([30](#)).

Therefore we can all benefit by regularly eating folate-rich foods, MTHFR mutation or not.

Best Food Sources of Folate

The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of folate for adults is 400 micrograms (0.4 milligrams) per day.



This number is increased by at least 100 micrograms for lactating and pregnant women ([31](#)).

The best sources of folate per 100 gram serving are:

- Beans and lentils (~50% RDA)
- Raw spinach (49% RDA)
- Asparagus (37% RDA)
- Romaine (Cos) lettuce (34% RDA)
- Broccoli (27% RDA)
- Avocado (20% RDA)
- Oranges/Mangoes (~10% RDA)

If you needed an additional reason to work more green vegetables and legumes into your diet, this is the one.

Other B-Vitamins

Several other B-vitamins also assist in converting folate and folic acid into the active form, L-methylfolate.

This includes vitamin B2 (Riboflavin) and vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine).

The best sources of vitamin B2 per 100 gram serving are:

- Almonds (60% RDA)
- Beef and lamb (51% RDA)
- Oily fish (34% RDA)
- Hard boiled eggs (30% RDA)
- Mushrooms (29% RDA)
- Spinach (14% RDA)
- Natural yoghurt (~14% RDA)

The best sources of vitamin B6 per 100 gram serving are:

- Sunflower seeds (67% RDA)
- Pistachio nuts (56% RDA)
- Oily fish (40-50% RDA)

- Turkey, chicken, pork and beef (34-40% RDA)
- Bananas (18% RDA)
- Avocados (14% RDA)
- Spinach (~12% RDA)

If you are deficient in either of these nutrients, part of the folate metabolism cycle will break down.

The other nutrient to keep in mind is vitamin B12 (Cobalamin).

It's required alongside L-methylfolate when breaking down homocysteine. Think of L-methylfolate as the fire, and B12 as the firewood.

Therefore, if you plan to supplement with L-methylfolate and/or significantly increase your dietary folate intake, increase your B12 intake as well.



Any Foods to Avoid?

No foods or nutrients are proven to directly affect folate metabolism or MTHFR enzyme activity in a negative way.

However, given the potential issues with folic acid (described in chapter 6), it is wise to avoid food products and nutrition supplements that contain folic acid.

In the USA, Canada, Australia and over 50 other countries (soon to include the UK), commercial bread, grain-based cereals and related wheat products all contain added folic acid ([15](#)).

This mandatory fortification helps reduce the incidence of neural tube defects, but may be problematic for those with a “severe” MTHFR mutation

Some health professionals believe antacids, certain blood pressure medications, metformin (for type 2 diabetes), and several contraceptives may all inhibit dietary absorption of B-vitamins to some extent.

If you regularly take any of these, it is best to seek personalised health advice from your doctor.

Summary

While more folic acid (often a *synthetic* vitamin B9 compound) is not beneficial, more folate (*natural* vitamin B9 compounds) certainly is.

In fact, we can all benefit by eating more folate, especially if you have an MTHFR mutation.

Vitamin B2, B6 and B12 are also important in folate metabolism, and should feature regularly in your diet.

Foods and supplements that contain added folic acid should be avoided where possible, and several medications may inhibit absorption of B-vitamins.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joe Leech is a fully qualified dietitian from Australia.

He first studied a Bachelor's degree in exercise science, but realised he was truly fascinated in nutrition... specifically diet-related health conditions and diseases. He went on to complete a Master's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

His published articles, videos and resources on the topic of MTHFR have now been used by more than 1.5 million people.

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