



GO FOLIC! Women's Nutrition Project

www.gofolic.org

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Go Folic! is a project of the San Francisco Department of Public Health's Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section.



Mitch Katz, M.D., Director
Gavin Newsom, Mayor

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT KICKS OFF GO FOLIC! WOMEN'S NUTRITION PROJECT TARGETING YOUNG WOMEN

SAN FRANCISCO—On Thursday, October 15th, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section, will hold a press conference to announce the launch of its Go Folic! Women's Nutrition Project targeting young women in San Francisco, ages 14 to 24. The press conference will take place in the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Office's 2nd Floor Conference Room, 30 Van Ness Avenue, 94102 at the corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue between 4:00 – 5:00 PM.

On October 15, 2009, the Go Folic! Women's Nutrition Project will kick off a youth-targeted viral marketing campaign. According to Angelique Tarazi, the project's Viral Marketing Coordinator, the campaign is designed to create awareness among young women of a vitamin distribution program that will begin on October 19, 2009. It will also educate young woman about the importance of getting adequate folic acid in their diets. In addition to Ms. Tarazi, the following individuals will speak at the launch: Michael Baxter, Director, Community Health Programs for Youth; Yeva Johnson, M.D., Medical Director, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section.

The Go Folic! Vitamin Distribution Program will provide clients at six DPH Community Health Programs for Youth clinics with a year's supply of free multi-vitamins that meet the daily requirement for folic acid. The Go Folic! Viral Marketing Campaign will engage San Francisco's youth community in an innovative and interactive grassroots effort to increase folic acid intake among young women. Go Folic! will utilize MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, blogs and similar networks to involve its target audience in the folic acid discussion. Exciting activities at the press conference and project launch will include tasting samples of nutritious folate-rich snacks, free recipes, and a journalism contest for high school and college journalists.

According to Shivaun Nestor, Go Folic! Project Coordinator, "This project is important because folic acid is a B vitamin that is necessary for cell division and growth and that plays a crucial role in women's health. Folic acid supplementation may decrease a woman's risk for breast, cervical and colon

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cancer. In addition, it has been shown to support heart health and can be viewed as ‘beauty from the inside out’ as it improves the quality of a woman’s hair, skin and nails. Importantly, if a woman has been taking folic acid before she becomes pregnant, it greatly decreases her risk for having a baby with a neural tube defect and may reduce the risk of early pre-term labor.”

Michael Baxter, Director of DPH Community Health Programs for Youth, whose clinics serve young women up to age 24, states, “We are excited to participate in the Go Folic! Women’s Nutrition Project. Teenage and adult women need at least 400 mcg of folic acid daily for optimum health. However, we know that it can be difficult to get this amount, since the body only absorbs about 50% of the folate a woman gets from food. That’s why so many health experts recommend taking a daily multi-vitamin with the RDA for folic acid. However, good supplements can be expensive. It’s wonderful to be able to offer a good multi-vitamin formula to our clients for free.”

High school and college journalists who attend the press conference and publish an article about the Go Folic! Women’s Nutrition Project in their school newspaper by December 11, 2009, will be eligible to enter a student journalism contest. Journalists will be competing at either the high school or college level for one of three cash prizes: First Place, \$150; Second Place, \$100; Third Place, \$50. Winning articles will also be posted on the Go Folic! website, blog, and MySpace (high school articles) and FaceBook (college articles) pages.

The Go Folic! Women’s Nutrition Project is dedicated to improving the health of San Francisco women through education and vitamin distribution. The SFDPH Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section’s mission is to promote the health and well being of women of childbearing age, infants, children and adolescents who are at increased risk of adverse health outcomes by virtue of financial, language or cultural barriers. The Go Folic! Project is made possible by a grant from the Vitamin Cases Consumer Settlement Fund. Created as a result of an antitrust class action, one of the purposes of the Fund is to improve the health and nutrition of California consumers.

For more information about the youth launch and press conference, please contact Angelique Tarazi at 415.575.5670 or via email at tarazi.sfdph@yahoo.com. To schedule an interview with the Go Folic! Campaign team; please contact Mikael Wagner at 415.786.0428 or Shivaun Nestor at 415.575.5677.

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