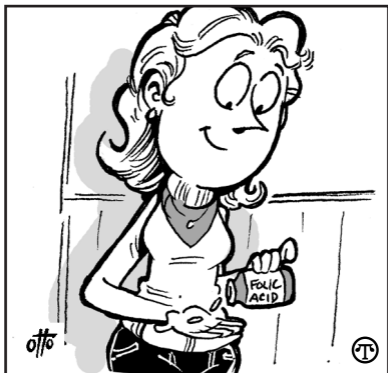


WOMEN'S HEALTH

Preventing Birth Defects

(NAPSA)—There are easy ways to prevent spina bifida, a common birth defect that happens during the first month of pregnancy when the spine of the baby fails to close.

It's the most common, permanently disabling birth defect in the U.S. Each day, eight babies are born with a birth defect of the brain and spine. Every woman who could possibly become preg-



Taking folic acid every day—before women get pregnant—can greatly reduce the risk of a common birth defect, spina bifida.

nant is at risk of having a baby with spina bifida. Fortunately, research studies show that taking a multivitamin with folic acid every day can reduce the risk by up to 70 percent, especially since half the pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned.

Birth defects can happen in any family and defects such as spina bifida can happen early in a pregnancy—before a woman even knows she is pregnant.

To learn more, contact the Spina Bifida Association of America at (800) 621-3141 or visit www.sbaa.org.