

Multivitamins, folic acid and neural tube defects: Knowledge, beliefs and behavior of Latinas in North Carolina

Presented by:

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Latino immigrants

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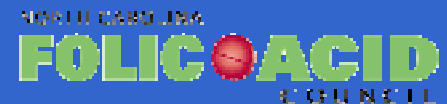
Neural tube defect rates in North Carolina



Latinos in North Carolina have two times the rate of babies born with neural tube defects compared with other races/ethnicities



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, April 2006



What is the North Carolina Folic Acid Council?

- **Program goal:**
 - Increase multivitamin consumption among young women of childbearing age in order to reduce the number of neural tube defect-affected pregnancies in the state.
- **Program elements:**
 - Community Ambassador (lay health educator) program
 - Office Champion program (health care provider education)
 - Media – television, radio and newspaper
 - **FREE** materials, videos/DVDs
 - **FREE** Folic Acid 101 course
 - **FREE** cultural awareness workshops



Survey methodology

- 2006 baseline survey to measure impact of intervention (2006 – 2008).
- 12 counties selected: 6 urban and 6 rural.
- Urban and rural counties were paired together based on similarities in population size of Latina women.
- Random selection of pairs with probability proportional to the combined size of the pair.
- Within each pair, one county was randomly assigned as the “intervention” or “comparison.”



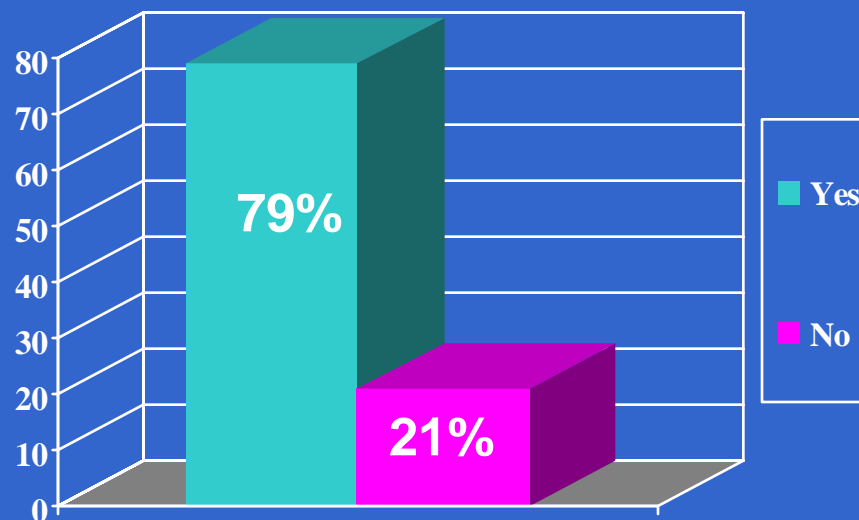
Survey methodology

- Eligible respondents included:
 - Women, age 18 – 35
 - Born outside of the U.S. (including Puerto Rico)
 - Spoke Spanish as their first language & the majority of the time
 - Lived/resided in one of the 12 intervention counties
- More than 1,100 surveys completed; 896 eligible for analysis.
- Utilized SPSS and STATA to analyze data.



Birth defect knowledge

Have you read, seen or heard something about *birth defects*?



If yes, what have you read, seen or heard about birth defects?

- Gave a general definition of birth defects (22%)
- Babies born with missing body parts/deformities (18%)
- Mentioned spina bifida, folic acid and/or multivitamin (18%)
- Caused by parent drinking alcohol, smoking and/or taking drugs (14%)



Indicators of knowledge: birth defects

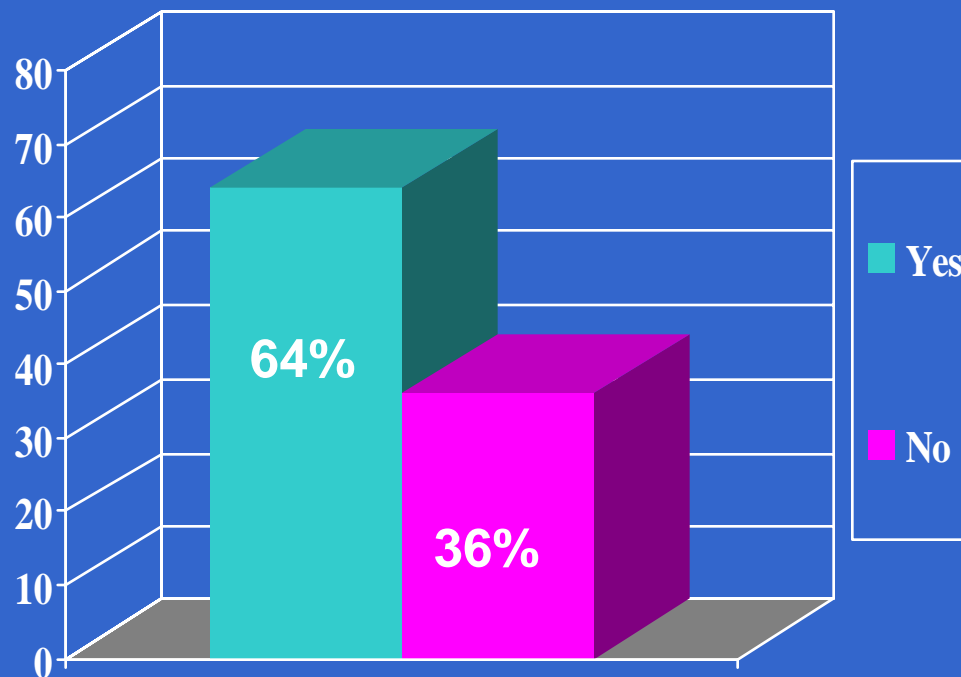
What indicators increase the odds that a Latina is more likely to have some knowledge about birth defects?

- A previous pregnancy
- Between the ages of 25 - 30
- Living in the United States for 11 years or longer
- Education of some high school or higher



Multivitamin knowledge

Have you read, seen or heard something about *multivitamins*?



If yes, what have you read, seen or heard about multivitamins?

- Good for your health (52%)
- Should be taken during pregnancy (32%)
- Should be taken before pregnancy (22%)
- For a healthy baby/baby development (9%)



Indicators of knowledge: Multivitamins

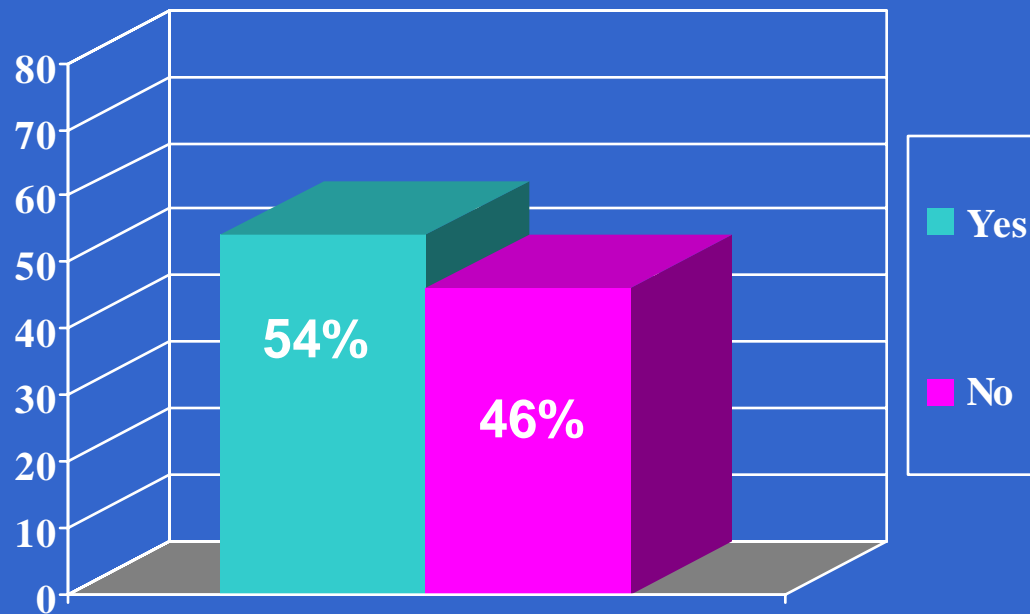
What indicators increase the odds that a Latina is more likely to have some knowledge about multivitamins?

- Born in a Latin American country other than Mexico
- A previous pregnancy
- Between the ages of 25 - 30
- Living in the United States for 11 years or longer
- Education of some high school or higher



Folic acid knowledge

Have you read, seen, or heard something about *folic acid*?



If yes, what have you read, seen or heard about folic acid?

- Prevents birth defects (36%)
- Good for a baby during pregnancy (34%)
- Should be taken before pregnancy (21%)
- Related to brain/spine/development (20%)



Indicators of knowledge: Folic acid

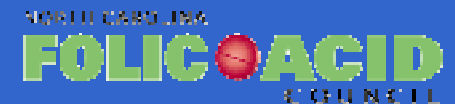
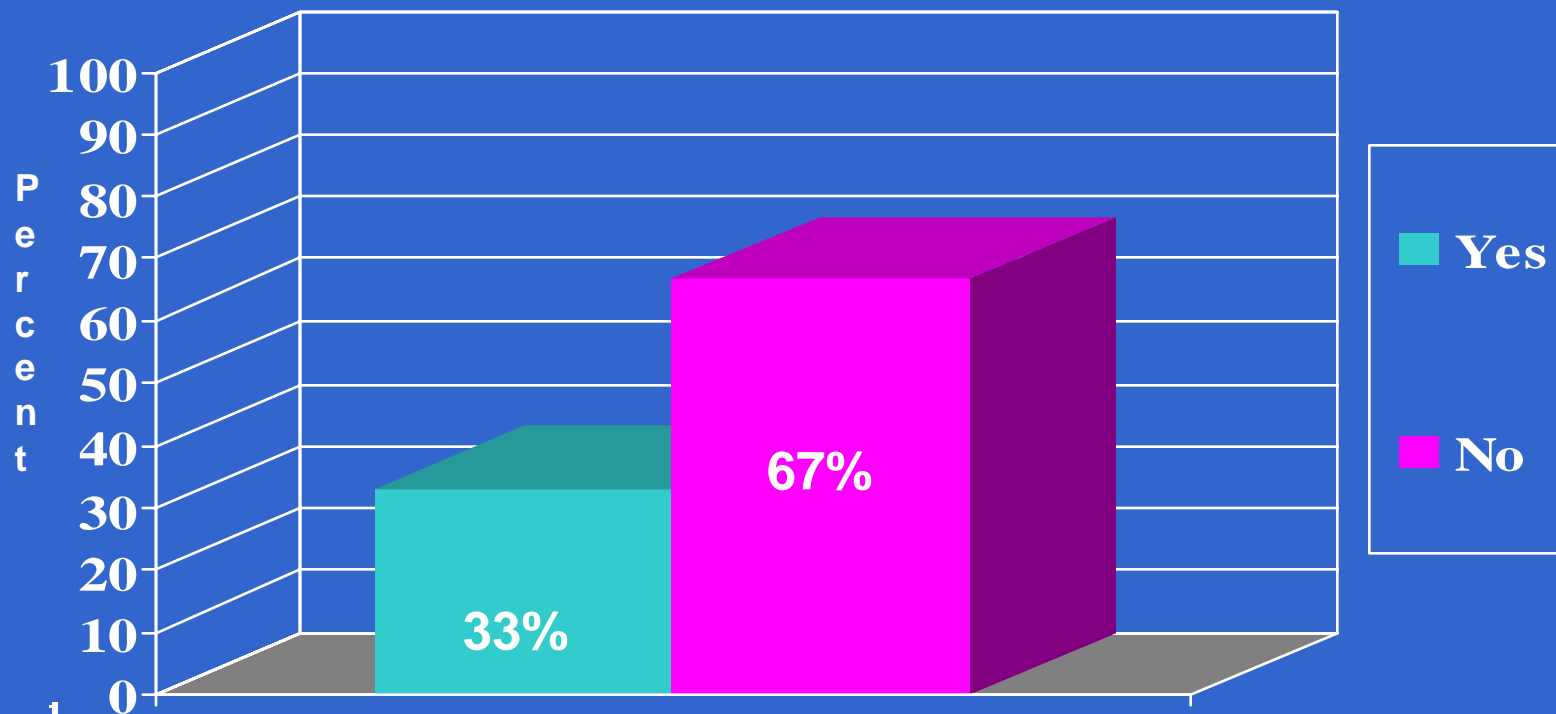
What indicators increase the odds that a Latina is more likely to have some knowledge about folic acid?

- A previous pregnancy
- Currently pregnant
- Between the ages of 25 - 30
- Living in the United States for 11 years or longer
- Education of some high school or higher



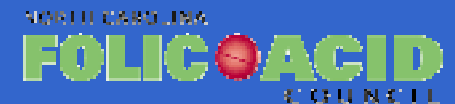
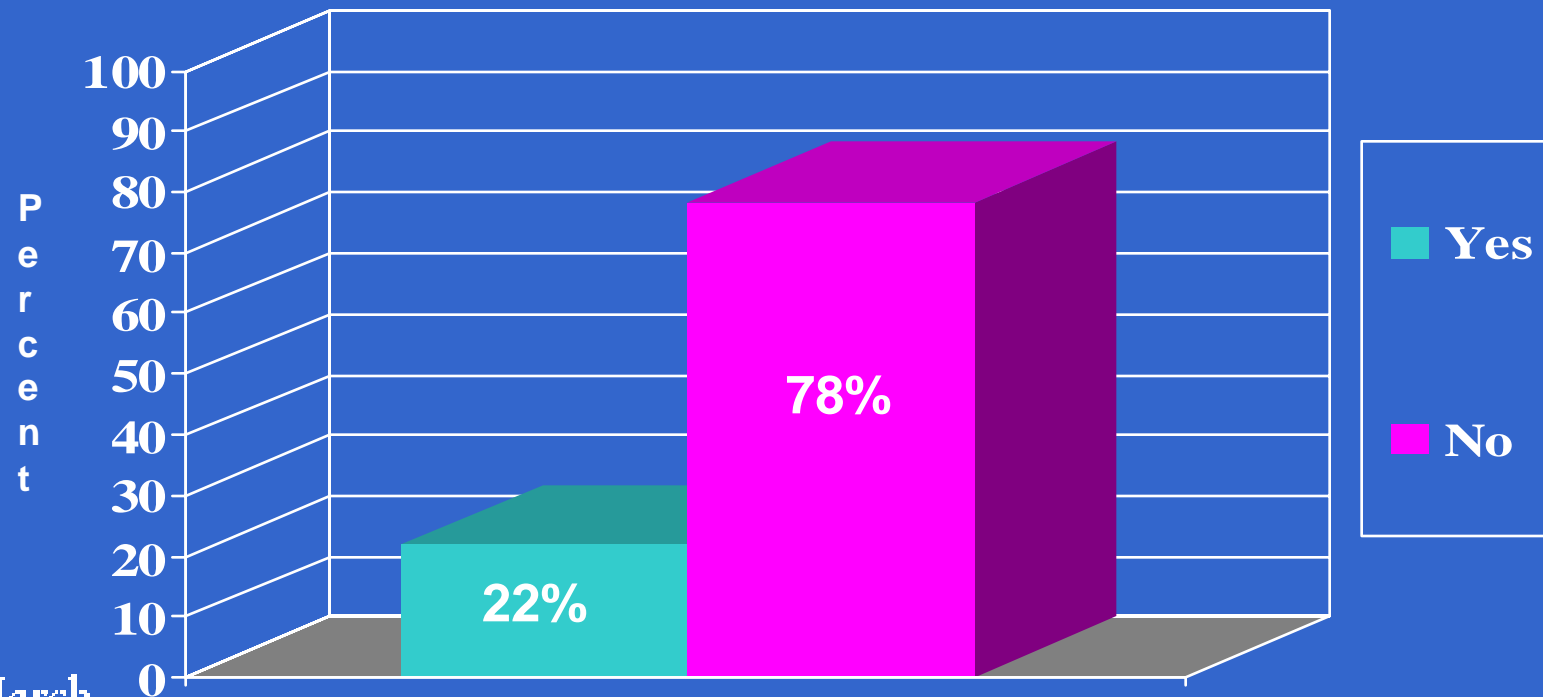
Latinas in North Carolina: Taking multivitamins

Percent of pregnant and non-pregnant Latina women of childbearing age in NC who take a multivitamin at least five days a week.



Planning a pregnancy and taking a multivitamin

Percent of Latina women of childbearing age in NC who are planning a pregnancy and take a multivitamin at least five days a week.



Indicators of taking a multivitamin

What indicators increase the odds that a Latina is more likely to take a multivitamin at least five days a week?

- Born in a Latin American country other than Mexico
- Between the ages of 25 – 35
- A previous pregnancy
- Currently pregnant



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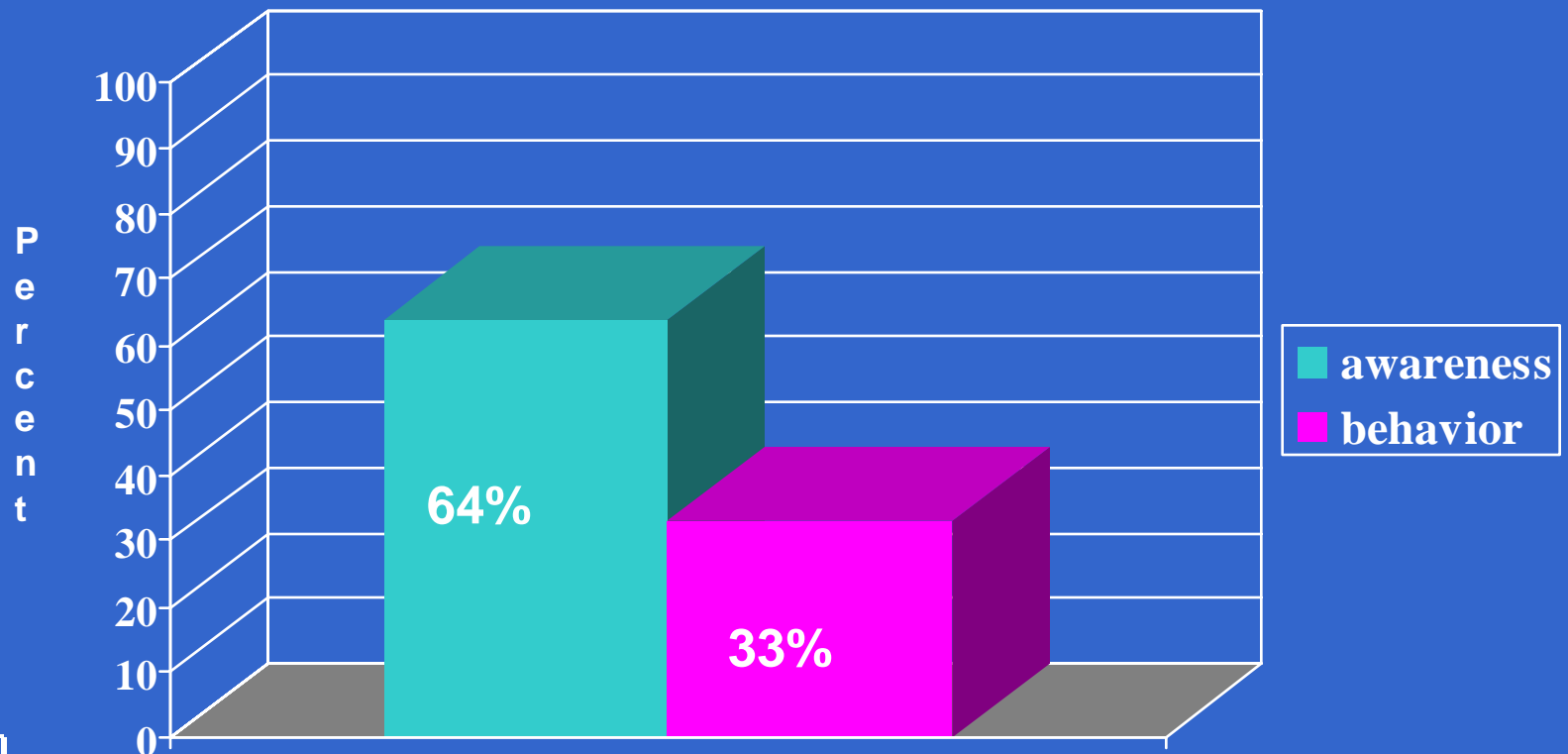
Why don't Latinas take a multivitamin?



1. No particular reason
2. I do not think I need them
3. I forget
4. Weight gain
5. Not planning a pregnancy
6. Don't know anything about multivitamins

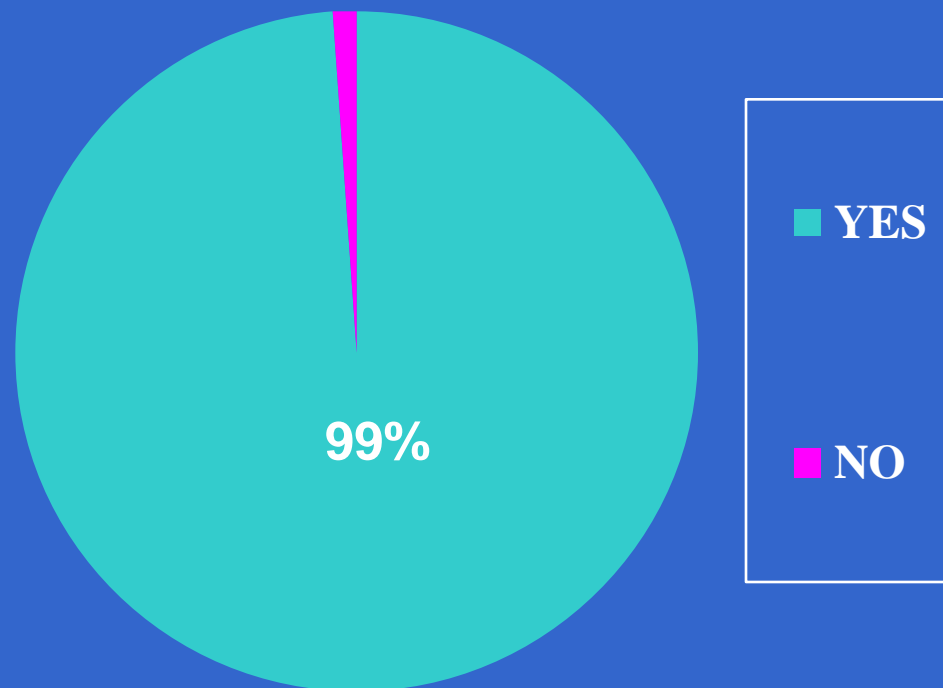
Does awareness translate to behavior for Latinas in NC?

Percent of pregnant and non-pregnant Latinas of childbearing age in NC who have some knowledge about a multivitamins and take a multivitamin at least five days a week.

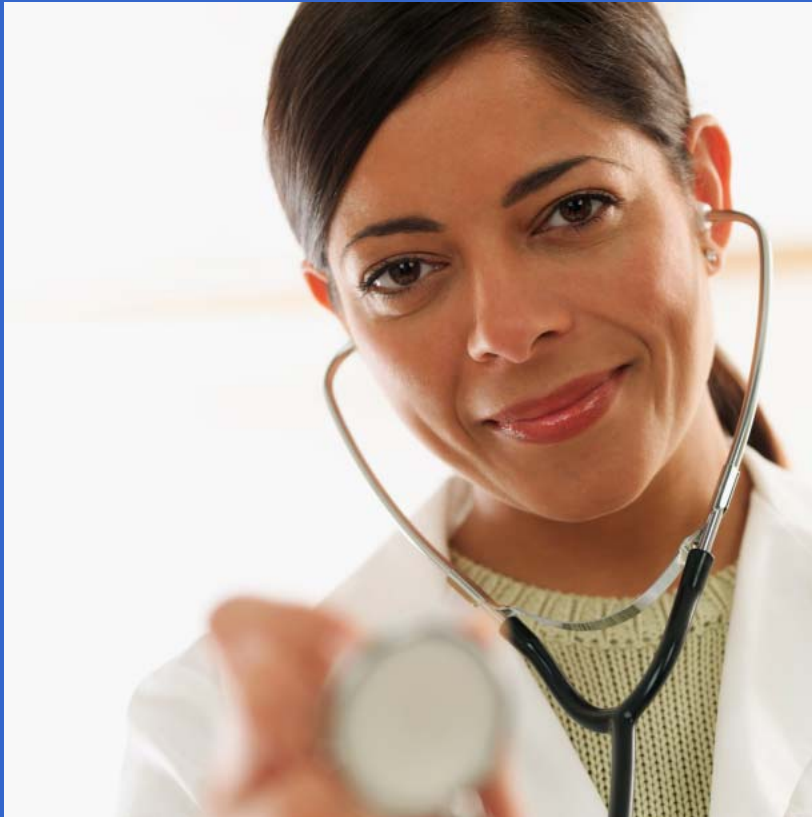


Who can change behavior?

Latinas stated that if their health care provider told them to take a multivitamin with folic acid...they would!



Where would Latinas go for more information?



- To learn more about multivitamins/folic acid, Latinas would go to their *health care provider, doctor, nurse, and/or a medical facility, clinic, community health center, or health department.*



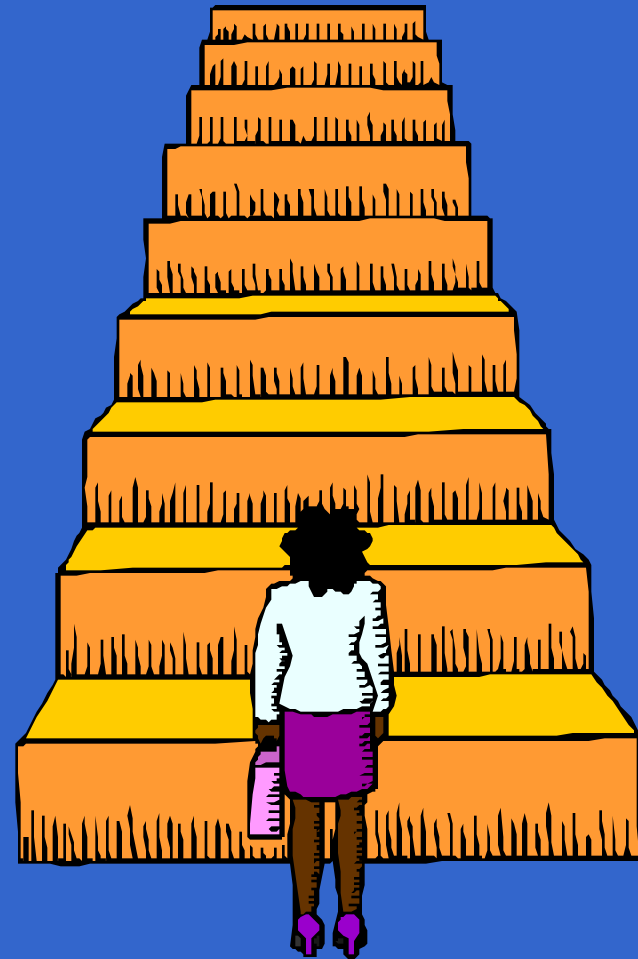
In summary...

- More knowledge exists about multivitamins and birth defects than folic acid.
- Evidence shows that there is a correlation between multivitamin use and education, previous pregnancies, and time in the United States.
- Latinas planning pregnancies are less likely to take a multivitamin.
- Health care providers can influence Latinas to take a multivitamin.



Next steps...

- Follow up post-test survey beginning in February 2008.
- Continuation of program elements until the completion of the evaluation.
- Change and/or modification of program elements, based on evaluation.
- Information sharing and collaboration.



For further information:

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