

Does Green Tea Really Prevent My Body From Absorbing Folate?

by Crystal Ferguson, BS Chemistry

Recently, many bloggers have come out sharing their sensationalized concern over pregnant women drinking green tea. Their concerns were based on a 2008 *in vitro* study (a study done in a petri dish or test tube) that showed that a substance in green tea, epigallocatechin gallate (EGCg), an “anti-folate,” would bind to an enzyme involved in folate metabolism, dihydrofolate reductase. Their concern was that anyone consuming EGCg would virtually stop all folate absorption. However, an *in vivo* rat study (a study done in live animals) in 2009, showed that blood folate levels were only reduced in rats who were given extreme concentrations of green tea, higher than any person would drink tea. They further found that green tea do not affect blood folate levels in humans. The conclusion of a 2013 *in vivo* rat study was that green tea was a poor source of folate but that the small levels of EGCg ingested through tea did not have much effect on folate absorption.

The bottom line is that studies done in a petri dish do not always equate to what happens in living bodies. Scientists do not currently know how the body combats the binding action of EGCg, but they do know that even the most avid tea drinker is not getting enough to cause folate deficiency. So, if green tea is your thing, enjoy a cup or two, even daily if you like it. But if you want some great sources of folate, stick to your leafy greens—spinach, broccoli, and (non-iceberg) lettuces.

References

[Biopharm Drug Dispos.](#) 2008 Sep;29(6):335-48. doi: 10.1002/bdd.617.

Food and Nutrition Sciences, 2013, 4, 136-143 <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/fns.2013.42019> Published Online February 2013 (<http://www.scirp.org/journal/fns>)

[J Physiol Pharmacol.](#) 2009 Sep;60(3):103-8.

I have received positive results from my GBS screening. I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand the risks of GBS and the risks and benefits of my treatment options, including doing nothing. My choice for treatment is indicated below:

- I choose to transfer care to another provider.
- I choose to obtain a prescription for antibiotics.
- I choose to attempt to eliminate GBS with nutritional supplements, herbal suppositories, and/or vaginal cleansing.
- I choose to take no action at this time or during labor.
- Other: _____

signature of mother date | signature of father/partner date | signature of midwife date