Folic Acid Intake and Spina Bifida in New Mexico

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**Abstract**
- Spina bifida is a preventable neural tube defect linked to the folic acid intake of women.2
- The rates of spina bifida are highest among women of Latin American decent.2
- Educational approach: diet plan and brochures.

**Background**
- Spina bifida is caused by the failure of a fetal spinal column to close.3
- There is no known cure for spina bifida.6
- Best prevention is adequate folic acid intake by periconceptual and pregnant women.2
- In New Mexico, 5.63 out of every 10,000 live births are affected by spina bifida.1

**Methods/Process**
- Went to the Hispanic foods section of a local market and determined which foods would be most accessible and budget-friendly.
- Created a diet plan and displayed it on example plates.
- Made brochures in English and Spanish containing more information on spina bifida prevention.
- Distributed brochures and plates in hospitals, schools, churches, supermarkets, and other public places around New Mexico.

**Project Goals/Objectives**
- Decrease rate of spina bifida in New Mexico through education and implementation of a diet plan.
- Make the diet plan affordable, broadly nutritious and culturally cohesive.

**Results/Outcomes**
- In order to determine the significance of our intervention, we will compare the previously established rate of neural tube defects with a new rate, which we will determine five years after the implementation of our plan.

**Conclusions/Recommendations**
- We anticipate a significant decrease in the rate of spina bifida in New Mexico.
- If this is the case, we will recommend extending our program to other high risk communities.

**Acknowledgments**
- We would like to thank our professors, Helen Vassallo and Jill Rulfs, for helping us to complete this project.
- We would also like to thank Pricechopper Supermarkets for allowing us to photograph their merchandise and store.
- All photographs included on this poster are original photographs.

**References**

**Spina Bifida Rates in the United States**

![Map of Spina Bifida Rates in the United States](image)

**Results/Outcomes**

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**References**