**Folic acid**

 нескольce combined iron and folic acid preparations are available.

**CLASSIFICATION**
- Nutrition and blood.
- Vitamin B-complex group.

**CAUTION.**
- Pregnancy.

**INDICATIONS**
- Women planning pregnancy.
- Chronic haemolytic states.
- Renal dialysis.
- Sickle cell anaemia.
- With vitamin B₁₂, in the treatment of megaloblastic anaemia.

**CONTRAINdications**
- Folic acid should not be used in undiagnosed megaloblastic anaemia unless vitamin B₁₂ is administered concurrently, otherwise neuropathy may be precipitated.

**SIDE-EFFECTS**
- Toxicity does not normally result from excessive folic acid intake, as folic acid is water-soluble and regularly excreted by the body.

**ADMINISTRATION**
- Tablets.
- Syrup.

**NUR sing CONSIDERATIONS**
- The use of vitamins as general pick-me-ups is of unproven value and, in the NHS, they should only be prescribed to prevent or to treat deficiency.

**PATIENT TEACHING**
- A varied diet that contains fresh fruit and vegetables usually provides sufficient folic acid.
- Folic acid supplements should be continued until the 12th week of pregnancy.

**REFERENCES**

Nurses should refer to manufacturer’s summary of product characteristics and to appropriate local guidelines.