



The Cochrane lab is recruiting a PhD nutrition student!

Project title: *PREFACE: PREconception Folic Acid Clinical Efficacy trial*

Principal Investigators:

Dr. Kelsey Cochrane, PhD, RD (Co-Principal investigator)

Assistant Professor

College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, Division of Nutrition

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

(Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Crystal Karakochuk, University of British Columbia)

Project summary & aims:

Folic acid supplementation is recommended from preconception until the end of lactation. However, another form of supplemental folate, 5-MTHF, is also approved by Health Canada and is increasingly being used by women who are pregnant and trying to conceive. It is unclear whether these folate forms should be considered interchangeable, as they have different chemical structures and are metabolized differently. To address this gap, we are conducting a multisite clinical trial in Vancouver, BC and Saskatoon, SK. Women who are trying to become pregnant will be recruited and randomized to supplementation with folic acid or 5-MTHF; supplementation will continue until ~1 month postpartum. We aim to ensure that supplementation with 5-MTHF is as effective as folic acid in increasing maternal blood folate concentrations by early pregnancy (~6 weeks' gestation) and throughout pregnancy, and will evaluate outcomes related to fetal growth and human milk folate composition. Our results will help to confirm the safety and effectiveness of prenatal supplements containing 5-MTHF. This study is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (2023 Fall Project Grant).

The current position is for a PhD Nutrition student at the University of Saskatchewan, to lead the clinical trial at the Saskatoon site, under the supervision of Dr. Cochrane.

Skills & qualifications:

- Knowledge related to perinatal nutrition, folate/B-vitamins, one carbon metabolism, pregnancy physiology, fetal growth, and/or human milk
- Clinical trial experience, as evidenced by relevant academic training and scholarly outputs (e.g., peer-reviewed publications)
- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Ability to work independently, find creative solutions, and meet deadlines
- Excellent written (lay and scientific) and verbal communication skills

Anticipated start date: September 2024



Financial support: The candidate will be provided with a stipend and will also be expected to apply for internal and external scholarships.

How to apply:

- Please send your CV including information about your previous academic degrees, peer-reviewed publications, courses completed, and abstracts from scientific conferences
- If applicable, please send proof of English proficiency
- If available, please describe any potential or confirmed funding sources that could be used to support your studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

Submit your application to Dr. Cochrane: kelsey.cochrane@usask.ca; please use the following subject title: PhD PREFACE USask. We thank all applicants for their interest; only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, in accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. We are committed to providing accommodations to those with a disability or medical necessity. If you require an accommodation to participate in the recruitment process, please notify us and we will work together on the accommodation.

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USask is located centrally in Saskatoon, SK, on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors and reaffirm our relationship with one another.