



## ***We are recruiting two PhD nutrition students!***

**Project title:** *PREconception Folic Acid Clinical Efficacy (PREFACE) Trial*

**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 those 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. Individuals who are trying to become pregnant will be randomized to supplementation with folic acid or 5-MTHF; supplementation will continue until ~1 month postpartum. Our aim is to ensure that supplementation with 5-MTHF is as effective as folic acid in increasing maternal blood folate concentrations throughout pregnancy, and we 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).

### **Principal Investigators:**

Dr. Crystal Karakochuk, PhD, RD

Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Micronutrients and Human Health  
Faculty of Land and Food Systems, Food, Nutrition, and Health  
The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia

Dr. Kelsey Cochrane, PhD, RD

Assistant Professor

College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, Division of Nutrition  
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

**We are recruiting for two PhD positions:** One student will be based at The University of British Columbia (Vancouver), and one will be based at the University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon).

### **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



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SASKATCHEWAN

**Anticipated start date:** January 2025 or September 2025

**Financial support:** The successful candidate will receive a minimum stipend of \$24,000 CAD per year for the duration of their PhD degree. Students 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

Submit your application to Drs. Karakochuk and Cochrane: [Crystal.karakochuk@ubc.ca](mailto:Crystal.karakochuk@ubc.ca) and [Kelsey.cochrane@usask.ca](mailto:Kelsey.cochrane@usask.ca); please use the following subject title: PREFACE PhD position

We will be accepting applications until November 15<sup>th</sup>. We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

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.