

Creating a Presentation

A face-to-face presentation is a great way to share information about folic acid and its importance in significantly reducing the risk of birth defects such as spina bifida. This interactive form of communication gives a specific and captive audience timely information and calls upon them to act to spread the word.

Presentation Tips:

- Know the material. You can learn more by researching, and by practicing over and over again. (To make things easy, check out a sample presentation at www.folicacid.ca that you can use.)
- If creating your own presentation, find images of babies with spina bifida and other relevant birth defects to include in your slides. Showing the impact of these birth defects will make the disabilities a powerful reality to people who see the presentation.
- Get the attention of your audience and tell them what they need to know and what they need to do.
- Don't rush. Speak slowly, but not too slowly. Change your pitch and tone, as well as your volume, to emphasize certain points and keep your audience interested. Pause for effect from time to time, too.
- Make eye contact with people in your audience for a few seconds at a time, and be sure to scan the room so everyone feels you are speaking to them directly.
- Following the presentation, encourage questions. Even if you don't have all of the answers, offer to get back to people with the answers and if they want you to, be sure to follow up.
- Hand out folic acid information (e.g., brochures downloaded from www.folicacid.ca).

Keep your presentation short and to the point. Place only the most important information on each screen and expand on each slide using speaking notes you can have with you at the podium, just in case you need them. But don't stick to the podium. Moving around the room not only helps you work out any nervous energy, it's one more way to ensure your audience keeps paying attention.

You can find a sample presentation that contains a complete set of speaking notes by [clicking here](#).

As an added bonus, on its [website](#), Toastmasters shares [10 Tips for Public Speaking](#), adapted on the next page for your use. You can also visit their site for additional tips and techniques.

10 Tips for Public Speaking

1. Know your material, and know more about it than you include in your presentation. Use personal stories and conversational language so you won't easily forget what to say.
2. Practice. A lot. Rehearse out loud with all equipment you plan to use. Work to control filler words such as um, uh and like. Practice, pause and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected, and for questions.
3. Know the audience. Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.
4. Know the room. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.
5. Relax. Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything. Transform any nervous energy into enthusiasm.
6. Visualize yourself giving your speech. Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence.
7. Realize that people want you to succeed. Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They're rooting for you. They're in attendance because they want to hear what you have to say.
8. Don't apologize for any nervousness – the audience probably never noticed it.
9. Concentrate on the message – not the medium. Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience, and why it is so important that they leave knowing that taking a multivitamin containing folic acid is a critical step for all women of childbearing age in order to significantly reduce the risk of birth defects such as spina bifida.
10. Gain experience, if you can. Your speech should represent you — as an authority and as a person. Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking.