



INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION
for
SPINA BIFIDA
and
HYDROCEPHALUS



Why should we prevent who we love?

Pierre Mertens

President IF

Dar es Salaam 2011



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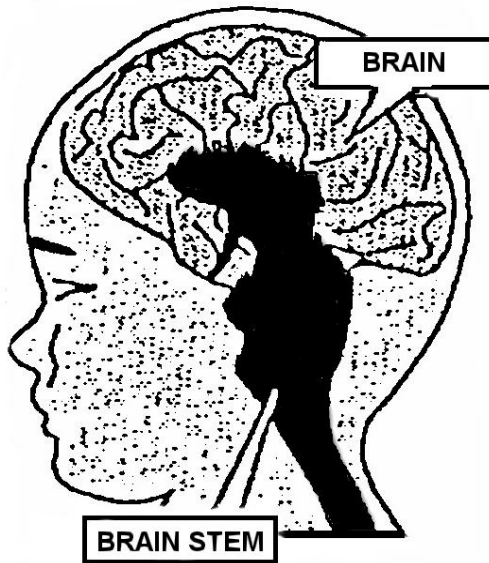
an obvious gap in the skin covering the spine,
the vertebrae and the nervous system are damaged,
leading to some degree of paralysis



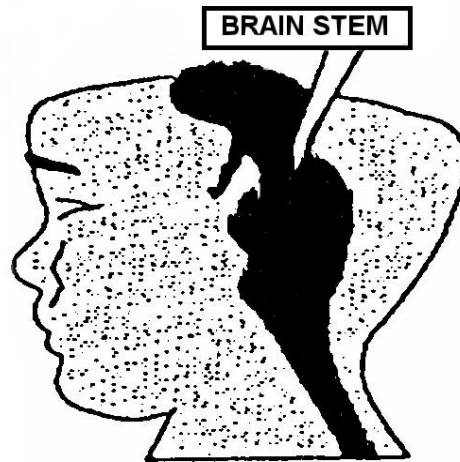
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NORMAL INFANT



ANENCEPHALIC INFANT



Anencephaly is a neural tube defect where the brain is not fully developed.



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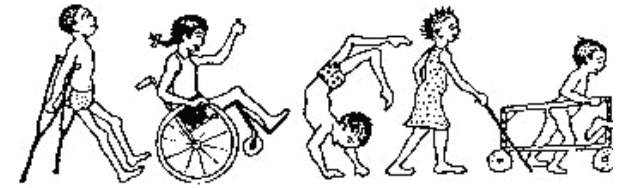




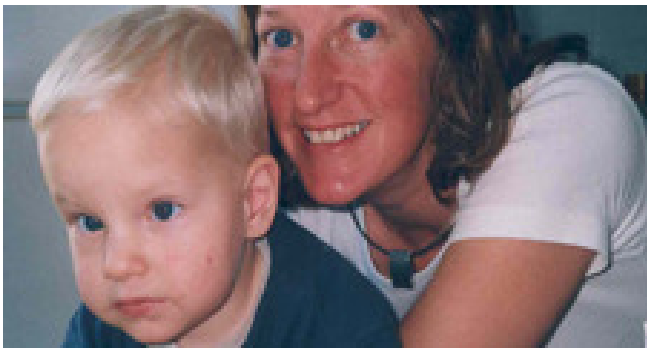
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Liesje Mertens



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The IF- network of people with Spina Bifida took the lead in primary prevention

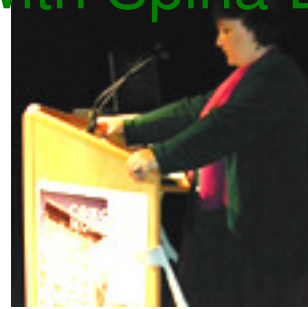


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Some persons with Spina Bifida



Olga, doctor (NL)



Guro, ex-minister (N)



Vicky, lawyer and mother (Guatemala)



Jeffrey Tate, conductor opera Naples



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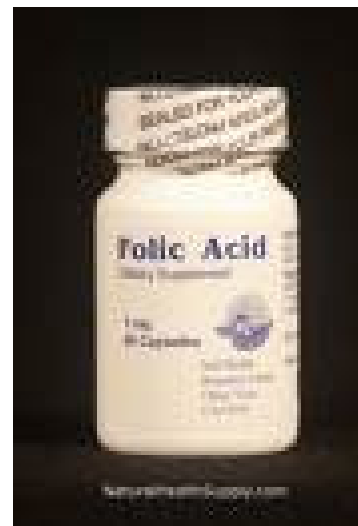


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With Folic Acid the same child is born without a disability!

A daily intake of 0.4 mg of Folic Acid, at least two months prior to the conception and during the first months of pregnancy





**Even with the best prevention campaigns to physicians,
pharmacies and in the media
to the whole population, our impact is limited.**



Therefore IF advocates for mandatory fortification of staple food with Folic Acid





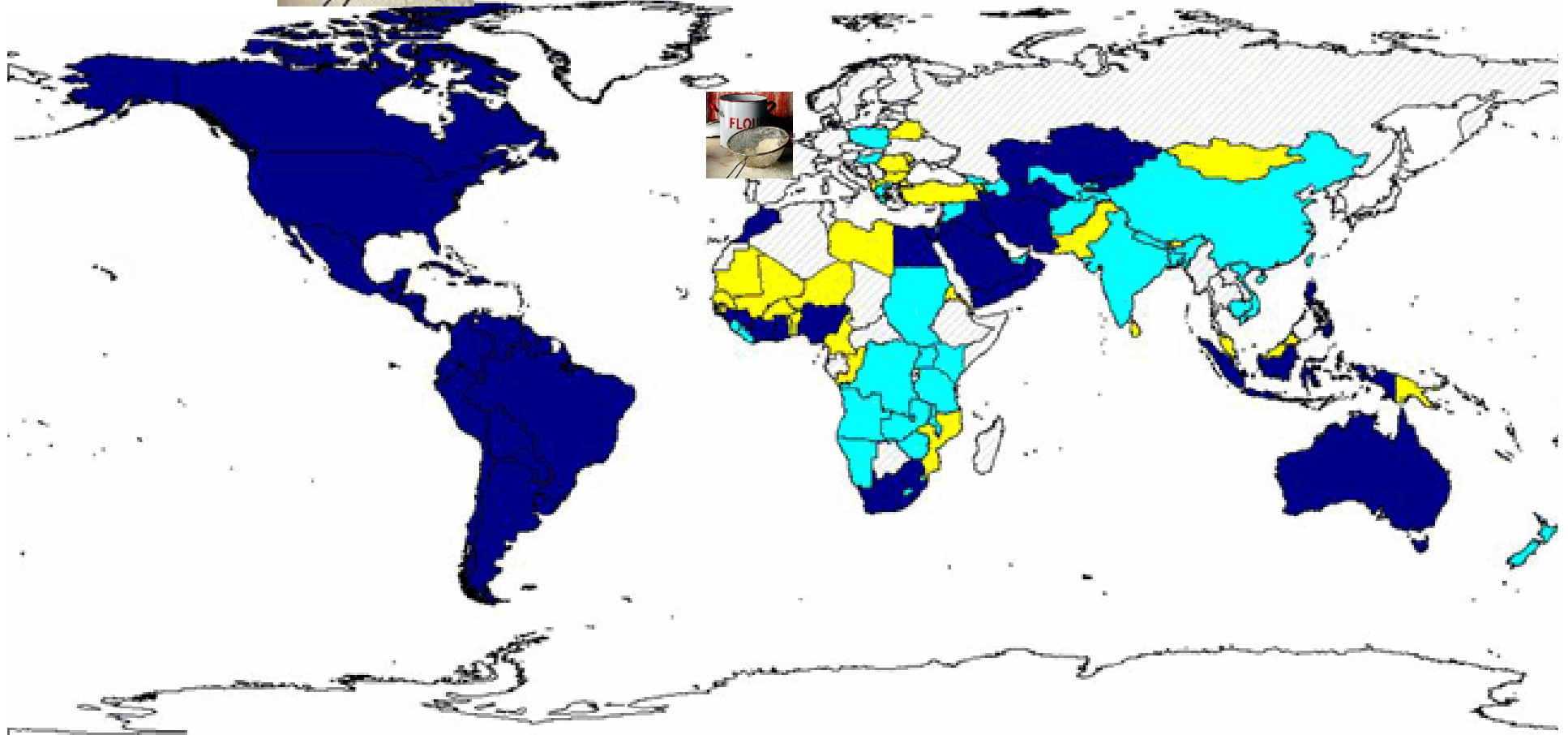
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	No Fortification
	Planning
	Voluntary
	Mandatory



Europe remains a white spot on the flour fortification map





What do we want?

- To improve periconceptional folate levels in all women of childbearing age.
- Fortification of staple food with Folic Acid





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prevent