M1 - Renal, Fall 2007

Lyons, R.; Burney, R.

<http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/64946>
http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/64946
Folate ("One-Carbon") Pathways

Click on any blue box to see details
(Start with the section with "Diet" and follow the paths with red arrows)
Folic Acid is Synthesized By Bacteria

Dietary folate: folic acid (meats, green veggies) 
*requires* the intestinal enzyme ‘Conjugase’ for absorption.
Inhibitors of DHFR are important therapeutics:
Methotrexate - chemotherapy
Trimethoprim - inhibits bacterial DHFR
Pyrimethamine - inhibits malarial DHFR
Methionine Cycle
And Biological Methyl Groups
\[ \text{homocysteine} \rightarrow N^\ominus -\text{methyl THF} \rightarrow \text{methionine} \]

Methionine can be converted back to homocysteine by vitamin $B_12$. The reaction involves the transfer of a methyl group from $N^\ominus$-methyl THF to the sulfur atom of homocysteine, forming methionine.
Tetrahydrofolate

Carbon donor (e.g. serine or glycine)

N⁰, N⁰ methylene tetrahydrofolate

methionine

NADH + H⁺

NAD⁺

homocysteine

N⁰ methyl tetrahydrofolate
Other methyl acceptors:
DNA ("CpG Islands")
RNA

Methionine

S-Adenosyl methionine

Norepinephrine

Epinephrine
Folate Deficiencies: Symptom: megaloblastic anemia

Dietary deficiency:
Common especially in developing countries, lower socioeconomic classes
Folate deficiency secondary to bowel irritation:

- Conjugase is essential for adequate absorption of dietary folates

- Conjugase production may be compromised by bowel irritation:
  
  ‘Tropical Sprue’ - bowel irritation probably arising from bacterial origin, causes intestinal inflammation and malabsorption.

  ‘Celiac Sprue’ - similar outcome, but the original irritation is due to an allergic response, for example to gliaden (a component in gluten)
Folate Deficiency Secondary to B12 deficiency: the ‘methyl trap’ hypothesis

B12 is also critical in other reactions, ones for which the deficiency has serious neurological consequences.