

World Heart Day Background, History And Awareness

Embrace 'Use Heart for Action'



World Heart day is an important annual event, witnessed every year on 29th September. The day is celebrated by organizing various activities and awareness events globally to raise awareness about heart disease and preventive measures to manage the cardiovascular diseases.

The events mainly focuses on educating people about the sign and symptoms of cardiovascular disease to avoid any further complications and encouraging people to inculcate a healthy lifestyle to prevent and control any heart related ailments.

Importance of World Heart Day

Heart is one of the vital organs of human body, malfunctioning of it may lead to fatality, so it is very essential for everyone to take care of heart health. Due to lack of awareness about the cardiovascular health and certain lifestyle habits, cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) is one of the leading reason for mortality worldwide. Every year, around 1.7 crores people die due to cardiovascular disease, accounting approx 31% of all global mortality.

Heart attack, Stroke and coronary heart

disease are one of the most common reason of deaths due to cardiovascular disorders. These heart disorders accounts for nearly 85% of total deaths due to cardiovascular ailments. World Heart day plays a vital role in creating awareness to educate people across the world to understand the importance of heart health and bringing other organization together to actively participate in organizing various events to create awareness.

World Heart Day Theme 2024

This year, 2024, the World Heart Day theme is "Use Heart for Action". This theme highlights a shift from awareness to empowering with a clear purpose and goal. There is also the two-way nature of action: efforts to influence policies and advocate for behaviour change and physical activity. It reflects the requirement for sustained efforts and collaboration.

The theme for World Heart Day 2024 is "USE HEART FOR ACTION." This theme encourages individuals to take care of their hearts and urges everyone to prioritize cardiovascular health.

Awareness and support for cardiovascular disease management in different countries varies, poor and developing countries doesn't have adequate access to heart care awareness and facilities, causing 75% of all cardiovascular death in these countries, which can be improved by organizing and participating awareness program globally to help the humankind.

Everyone can contribute for the healthy nature in their own way to fight air pollution, which accounts for 25% of all cardiovascular death and around 70 lakhs death every year globally.

Stress and poor lifestyle have been the prominent risk factors of heart attack, which can be dealt with improving our lifestyle by inculcating good habits like exercise, meditation, and getting quality sleep.

History of World Heart Day

The idea of having heart day globally was introduced by the Antoni Baie de Luna, former president of the World Health Federation, based on his ideas along with the collaboration of World Health Organization, World Heart Day was established in 1999. The world witnessed the first official World Heart Day celebration on September 24, 2000. Till 2011, the day continued its mission of creating awareness about the management of cardiovascular disease on the very last Sunday of September.

In 2012, with the idea to curb the global mortality due to non-communicable diseases by 25 percent by 2025, global leaders came together and urges to the world to actively participate for this cause and 29 September, was marked as global World Heart Day. More than 90 countries participates on this day to organize awareness campaigns to raise awareness and educate people about the cardiovascular health.

Preventive Measures to Keep Heart Healthy

Keeping body mass index under control (BMI), BMI Ranges - Underweight = <18.5, Normal weight = 18.5 - 24.9, Overweight = 25 - 29.9, Obesity = 30 or greater

Keeping an eye on high blood pressure (hypertension) and high level of cholesterol (Hyperlipidemia), Limiting the consumption of excess sodium - risk of high blood pressure (hypertension), Understanding the early signs & symptoms and taking appropriate action to avoid any complications, Avoiding sedentary lifestyle, opting for active lifestyle by indulging in physical activities, Monitoring heart health through consultation and awareness programs, Eating healthy and balanced diets, avoiding trans fat and junk foods

Avoid smoking & alcohol consumption and Exercises for Cardiovascular Health Cardiovascular health termed as the

health of blood vessels and the heart, cardiovascular diseases are a group of diseases of the heart and blood vessels.

Being physically fit is one of the key to keep cardiovascular disease like coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, peripheral arterial disease, rheumatic heart disease, congenital heart disease, deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism, heart attacks and strokes etc under control and managed.

It helps to tackle the risk factors of cardiovascular diseases like high cholesterol (hypercholesterolemia), diabetes mellitus, being overweight or obese, family history of CVD, smoking, alcohol intake and more.

Exercise helps strengthen the heart muscles, keeping BMI under control, reducing the risk of artery damage due to high cholesterol, high blood sugar and high blood pressure, avoiding the occurrence of Heart stroke.

Different type of exercises have different effects in cardiovascular diseases (CVDs).

Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercises like Brisk walking, running, swimming, cycling, playing tennis and jumping rope, improves circulation, which lowers high blood pressure and heart rate. It helps in cardiac output by improving the heart pumping. It also helps in managing type 2 diabetes.

Recommended: At least 30 mins/day for 5 days a week, Resistance Training

Resistance training helps in the case of obesity, people with big belly fat. Resistance training helps lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and improves the HDL (good) cholesterol. Working out with free weights like hand weights, dumbbells or barbells, weight machines, push-ups, squats and chin-ups are the good options for the resistance training.

Thrifty Gene Too Responsible for Heart Attacks in Youth



Dr. Deepak Chaturvedi

Dr. Deepak Chaturvedi, Senior Cardiologist and Director of Akshay

Heart Hospital, Bhopal, has highlighted the alarming rise in cases of sudden heart attacks among Indian youth. He emphasized that while there are many contributing factors, one key reason is the presence of the "Thrifty Gene." He said this while addressing a press conference held on the eve of World Heart Day.

The "Thrifty Gene" is a genetic trait that once helped our ancestors survive during periods of food scarcity by encouraging the body to store excess fat. However, in today's modern age, with abundant access to food, this gene has started to have an adverse effect. It promotes the accumulation of excess fat, which increases the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and ultimately heart attacks.

Dr. Chaturvedi also pointed out

several other medical factors contributing to heart attacks in youth. These include, Antiphospholipid syndrome, Dyslipidemia, Cognitive myocardial bridge Spontaneous coronary artery dissection, Drug abuse, Diabetes and insulin resistance, Family history of heart conditions and Hormonal imbalances in women.

He remarked that coronary artery disease (CAD) tends to occur at a younger age in Indians, with over 50% of cardiovascular disease (CVD) mortality occurring in individuals under the age of 50.

To prevent sudden heart attacks, Dr. Chaturvedi recommended routine medical tests such as clinical lipid profile assessments, ECGs, troponin tests, stress tests, CT angiography, and traditional angiography under



medical guidance. For treating sudden heart attacks, various methods

are employed, one of which is aspiration thrombectomy, a highly effective procedure.

Speaking on the risk factors for sudden heart attacks, Dr. Chaturvedi noted that while some risk factors are common in both young and older adults—such as dyslipidemia, tobacco use, diabetes, and hypertension—specific conditions like hyperhomocysteinemia, hypercoagulable states, and cocaine use are more prevalent among the younger population and contribute significantly to sudden heart attacks.

He also underscored a hidden cause of heart attacks in youth: psychological stress. Mental stress, including traumatic experiences from childhood, can also be a potential trigger for sudden heart attacks.

78 years post-Independence, India still fights for the right to breathe

Carbon Colonialism is the newest face of the oldest injustice. It refers to how wealthier, developed nations "outsourced" their pollution (especially Carbon Dioxide emissions) to the Global South, perpetuating the exploitative pattern of development at the cost of poorer countries.

The Global North is responsible for 92% of the globe's carbon emissions, but most of the brunt is borne by the Global South. Rising sea levels, poor AQI, unprecedented rainfall, and extreme heat are all symptoms of a doom waiting to fall on the Global South.

The United Kingdom imports 30-40 million bricks from India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, which raises a significant carbon issue. Each container carrying bricks travels 18000 km and releases about 600 tons of CO2, which is equivalent to the weight of 5 blue whales. Laurie Parsons finds in his research that industries in countries like Cambodia, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka involved in cotton and tea production experience environmental issues, economic instability, and social injustices such as bondage and child labour.

Scholar Tao Goffe argues that climate change is a mutant offspring of imperialism. Capturing the islands of the Caribbean, Europeans conducted several scientific experiments here. These included the creation of monocrop agriculture, the clearing of terrestrial and marine biodiversity, making the islands susceptible to extreme climate.

The duality is radical and hypocritical. On one hand, the Global North portrays itself as caring about the environment, signing treaties and making promises, while on the other, it engages in the practice of "Carbon Trading" - a tool meant for efficiency that often deepens in-

equality. Carbon trading is a practice where countries can trade their carbon credits (a cap limit on carbon emissions) with other countries. What's important to know is that carbon trading, though marketed as a method to reduce emissions, often acts as a 'license to pollute'. For instance, the European Union's Emissions Trading System (ETS) has been criticized for allowing heavy polluters to compensate for emissions by funding renewable energy projects in the Global South, while continuing unsustainable industrial practices at home.

The irony is sharp: the Global South—already facing climate vulnerabilities ends up shouldering the environmental burden of carbon trading projects.

In Uganda, vast tracts of land have been taken over by forestry projects to generate carbon credits for European companies, displacing local farmers and threatening food security.

This irony depicts the neo-colonialism of carbon trading: environmental responsibility is "outsourced", while profit and convenience remain concentrated in the Global North. 78 years post-independence, India still struggles to fight colonialism and repression at the hands of the Global North.

Our fight is not just against the pollution in the Ganga, or the smog in Delhi, or the unprecedented weather in Bhopal, but against the activist pretense of the Global North, which blinds us to believe they are environmentally conscious countries, all while we suffer poor AQI, urban heat waves, rising water levels, polluted rivers, and uncertain weather.

By Sharanya Tiwari, Head Girl, The Sanskaar Valley School

Nutritious Vrat-Friendly Ingredients You Should Try This Navratri

As Navratri approaches, families across India prepare for fasting, a practice rooted in devotion and discipline. Alongside tradition, fasting can also support wellness when paired with food made with the right ingredients. Nutrient-rich picks like Sabudana and California Almonds help maintain energy, aid digestion, and promote overall health through the nine days.

To make fasting healthier, Ritika Samadhar, Regional Head - Dietetics at Max Healthcare, shares her expert guidance on nutrient-dense ingredients that not only respect traditional vrat customs but also align with contemporary nutritional requirements. She recommends steering clear of refined sugars and fried foods, and focusing on natural, whole ingredients that sustain energy and overall wellness throughout the fast.

Here are some ingredients to include in your Navratri meals for a healthy and nourishing fast:

Almonds - The Perfect AM Bite
Among the most recommended ingredients for vrat, almonds stand out for their impressive nutrient profile. They provide a natural source of protein, healthy fats, vitamin E, and magnesium- nutrients that help keep you full, support heart health, and enhance energy levels during fasting. To make the most of these benefits, try starting your day with a small portion of soaked California Almonds to stay energized and satisfied for an extended period.

Sabudana - The Classic Energy Booster
Navratri is incomplete without enjoying sabudana khichdi or vada. Sabudana is gentle on the digestive system and packed with easily digestible carbohydrates, making it a great choice for a quick energy boost.

Add a dash of lemon for a refreshing touch. Just keep in mind that managing portion sizes is essential to prevent feeling sluggish after your meal.

Buckwheat (Kuttu) - The Nutrient-Dense Flour
Kuttu flour is a Navratri staple, ideal for



pancakes, cheelas, and other vrat-friendly dishes. Unlike refined flours, it's gluten-free and boasts a high content of fiber, magnesium, and antioxidants.

It aids digestion and provides lasting energy, making it an ideal choice for those fasting while managing their daily activities.

Samak Rice - The Lighter Grain Alternative

Missing your regular rice? Barnyard millet, or samak, is a great substitute. It's light on calories, high in B-complex vitamins,

and low in fat. Samak adds comfort without heaviness to your vrat dishes, whether prepared as a pulao or a kheer.

This Navratri, let your plate be a balance of tradition and mindful eating to stay energized throughout the nine days of dedication and celebration.

With the right choices, fasting can become more than just a spiritual practice—it's also an opportunity to care for your body and build healthy eating habits that you can stick with outside of the festive season.