

**EDITORIAL**doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3329/mediscope.v5i1.36718>**Different health related days in a calendar year observing worldwide****MS Laskar****Abstract**

There are many world days observed throughout the year related to specific health issues or conditions. Thus observing the different health related days maintaining a high-profile focus on universal health coverage via a series of events with global and local conversations about ways to achieve 'Health for All' is emphasized. The idea of observing such health related days for awareness is to spread knowledge on health issues and empower people in the decision making on health diagnosis and medical treatments. The observations seem to be reinforcing that it is a good step, and it might be even sufficient to address the health issue. Specific health related day may just be one day, but it is a day that needs to remind the importance of health as something that needs to be a part of everyday life. This article gives a brief description of different health related days in a calendar year observing worldwide.

Key words: health related days, calendar year, observing worldwide, awareness.

Background

There are many 'health related days' to promote important public health issues, many of which are supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners.¹ Global public health days offer great potential to raise awareness and understanding about health issues and mobilize support for action, from the local community to the international stage.¹ There are many world days observed throughout the year related to specific health issues or conditions.

'Health for All' has therefore been our guiding vision for decades. It is also the impetus behind the current organization-wide drive to support countries in moving towards universal health coverage (UHC). The WHO is calling on world leaders to live up to the pledges they made when they agreed to the Sustainable Development Goals, and commit to concrete steps to advance the health of all people. This means ensuring that everyone, everywhere can

access essential quality health services without facing financial hardship. Experience has illustrated, time and again, that UHC is achieved when political will is strong. Access to essential quality care and financial protection not only enhances people's health and life expectancy, it also protects countries from epidemics, reduces poverty and the risk of hunger, creates jobs and drives economic growth. Thus observing the different health related days (Table 1) maintaining a high-profile focus on UHC via a series of events with global and local conversations about ways to achieve health for all is emphasized.

World Cancer Day

World Cancer Day is marked on 4th February every year to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection and treatment since 2001.² It was established by the Paris Charter adopted at the World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millen-

Table 1. Health related days in a calendar year observing worldwide

Day	Date	Since
World Cancer Day	4 th February	2001
World Kidney Day	13 th March	2006
World Down Syndrome Day	21 st March	2012
World TB Day	24 th March	1982
World Autism Awareness Day	2 nd April	2007
World Health Day	7 th April	1950
World Malaria Day	25 th April	2008
World Asthma Day	First Tuesday of May	1998
World Hypertension Day	17 th May	2005
World Thyroid Day	25 th May	2008
World Digestive Health Day	29 th May	1959
World No-Tobacco Day	31 st May	1988
World Blood Donor Day	14 th June	2004
World Hepatitis Day	28 th July	2011
World Heart Day	Last Sunday of September	2000
World Mental Health Day	10 th October	1992
World Diabetes Day	14 th November	1991
World AIDS Day	1 st December	1988

nium held in Paris on 4th February 2000. This Charter aimed at the promotion of the research for curing as well as preventing the disease, upgrading the provided services to the patients, the sensitization of the common opinion and the mobilization of the global community against cancer. The primary goal of the occasion is to significantly reduce illness and death caused by cancer by 2020.

World Kidney Day

It is a global awareness campaign aimed at raising awareness of the importance of our kidneys.³ It is celebrated every 8th March by organizing many events and campaigns in all parts of the world by community and concerned bodies, with the aim of raising awareness for everyone, the awareness about preventive behaviors, risk factors and about how to live with the kidney disease being treated for reducing complication, deaths and disability.

World Down Syndrome Day

In December 2011, the United Nations General Assembly declared 21st March as the World Down Syndrome Day, with effect from

2012, and invited all member states, relevant organizations of the United Nations and other international organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to observe the day in an appropriate manner, in order to raise public awareness of Down syndrome.⁴

World TB Day

This annual event is marked on 24th March of every year to commemorate Dr. Robert Koch's discovery in 1882 for tubercle bacillus causing tuberculosis.¹ It was the first step towards diagnosing the disease and its treatment. Despite significant progress over the last decades, TB continues to be the top infectious killer worldwide.

World Autism Awareness Day

World Autism Awareness Day is observed around the world on 2nd April every year since 2007 for recognition of people living with autism.⁵ Autism-friendly events and educational activities take place to increase understanding and acceptance and foster worldwide support.

World Health Day

On the 7th April in 1948, the WHO held the world's first health assembly. The assembly decided to celebrate 7th April of each year which is effective from 1950 as the World Health Day.¹ The world health day is held to mark WHO's founding and to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year.

World Malaria Day

It is an occasion to highlight the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment for malaria prevention and control.¹ The world celebrates the World Malaria Day on 25th April of each year. With the required resources, and all partners united, we can transform our common vision "End malaria for good" into a shared reality.

World Asthma Day

World Asthma Day is an annual event organized by the Global Institute for Asthma to improve asthma awareness and care around the world.⁶ It is observed on the 1st Tuesday of May since 1998.

World Hypertension Day

World Hypertension Day is held on 17th May every year.⁷ Hypertension is considered one of the main factors leading to the cardiovascular disease accounting for the early death cases worldwide by enhancing health awareness of the community members, preventing from developing hypertension.

World Thyroid Day

The European Thyroid Association & American Thyroid Association established World Thyroid Day on 25th May 2008.⁸ Thyroid disease occurs widely in the world. It afflicts millions of people, affecting their daily life, increasing morbidity and reducing productivity.

World Digestive Health Day

Every 29th May, World Gastroenterology Organization celebrates World Digestive Health Day.⁹ Each year it focuses upon a particular digestive disorder in order to

increase general public awareness of prevention and therapy.

World No-Tobacco Day

It is observed around the world every year on 31st May.¹ It is intended to encourage a 24 hour period of abstinence from all forms of tobacco consumption around the globe. The member states of the WHO created World No-Tobacco Day in 1987.

World Blood Donor Day

Every year on 14th June countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day.¹ The event established in 2004, serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors for their voluntary life-saving gifts of blood.

World Hepatitis Day

World Hepatitis Day is observed on 28th July every year aiming to raise global awareness on hepatitis encouraging prevention, early diagnosis and treatment.¹ Hepatitis affects people worldwide, causing acute and chronic diseases and killing close to 1.4 million people every year.¹ Anti-Hepatitis B vaccination has been added in Expanded Program on Immunization many countries of the world including Bangladesh.

World Heart Day

World Heart Day is marked on 29th September.^{1,10} It is a part of an international campaign to spread awareness about heart diseases and stroke prevention. This is the perfect day to quit smoking, get exercising and start eating healthy to keep heart healthy. It is needed to focus on creating heart healthy environment and to ensure that people are able to make hearts healthy choices.

World Mental Health Day

Every year on 10th October, the WHO celebrates the World Mental Health Day.¹ The day is celebrated at the initiative of the World Federation of Mental Health & WHO to increase awareness on mental health issues.¹¹

World Diabetes Day

World Diabetes Day is held on 14th November of each year. It was introduced in 1991

by the International Diabetes Federation & the WHO.^{1,12} The day marks the birthday of Frederick Baiting who along with Charles Best first conceived the idea which led to the discovery of insulin in 1992.

World AIDS Day

World Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Day, observed on 1st December every year since 1988.^{1,13} Government officials, non-governmental organizations and individuals around the world observe the day to increase awareness on AIDS prevention and control. It is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), to show support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died from an AIDS-related illness. It is needed to fight for zero new HIV infection, zero discrimination and zero AIDS related deaths.

Discussion

By observing health related days for awareness, the idea is to spread knowledge on health issues and empower people in the decision making on health diagnosis and medical treatments. The mass-media can play a pivotal role in bringing forward such health issues to the mass population. The WHO does extensive studies across the globe to bring forward knowledge and preventive techniques from health problems. The observations seem to be reinforcing that it is a good step, and it might be even sufficient to address the health issue that really flies in the face of the complexity of the various forces (environmental, societal, and economic factors) that influence a person's health and a population's health.¹⁴ Specific health related day may just be one day, but it is a day that needs to remind the importance of health as something that needs to be a part of everyday life.

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