



National Deworming Day

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Why in News

Every year February 10 and August 10 are observed as the National Deworming Days (NDD).

- The days aim at **eradicating** intestinal worms also known as **Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH)**, among **children** in the age group of **1-19 years**.
- Children and adolescents are administered a single dose of a safe **medicine Albendazole** across government, government-aided schools, anganwadis, private schools and other educational institutions.

Deworming through Albendazole is an evidence-based, globally-accepted, effective solution used to control worm infections in all children.

- **Started in 2015** by the **Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare**, the **NDD is the largest public health program** implemented on a single day reaching crores of children and adolescents through two NDD rounds every year.
NDD is a key intervention of **Anemia Mukh Bharat**.
- The program is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- Its success and impact lie in convergence with the **Swachh Bharat Mission**. NDD also presents opportunities to further policy dialogue on health and nutrition as a way of supplementing efforts under **POSHAN Abhiyan**.

Intestinal Worms

- Intestinal worms are **parasites** that live in the human intestines and consume nutrients and vitamins that a child consumes.
- There are **three main types** of STH that infect people, roundworm (Ascaris lumbricoides), whipworm (Trichuris trichiura) and hookworms (Necator americanus and Ancylostoma duodenale). These worms depend on the human body for their food and survival and while being there, they lay thousands of eggs each day.

- **Transmission:** STHs are transmitted via eggs in faeces deposited in the local environment, typically through open defecation or lack of proper hygiene.
- **Impact:**
 - Since worms feed on host (human body) tissues, including blood, it leads to loss of iron, and protein, resulting in anaemia – reduced oxygen carrying capacity due to less Haemoglobin (Hb) available in the body.
 - Worm infection can also lead to diarrhoea; dysentery; loss of appetite; reduced nutritional intake and physical fitness; increased malabsorption – a condition that prevents absorption of nutrients through the small intestine.
- In India, over 22 crore children under 14 years of age are at risk of STH infections.

Source: PIB