



National Deworming Day

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 Mukht 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

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