

National Deworming Day 2026, Theme, Features, Significance

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National Deworming Day is a nationwide public health initiative aimed at protecting children from harmful intestinal worm infections that silently affect growth, nutrition and learning ability. In India, a large number of children remain at risk of Soil Transmitted Helminths (STH) due to sanitation and hygiene challenges. These worms live in the intestines and consume essential nutrients required for physical and mental development. To address this hidden burden, the Government of India provides free and safe deworming tablets, ensuring preventive healthcare reaches even asymptomatic children.

National Deworming Day 2026

National Deworming Day 2026 will be observed on 10 February 2026 and on 10 August 2026, continuing India's biannual fixed day approach to deworming children and adolescents. It was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The programme targets all children aged 1 to 19 years, enrolled or non enrolled. Albendazole tablets are administered through schools, Anganwadi centres and outreach by ASHAs. By February 2019, over 22 crore children were covered in a single round, making it one of the world's largest preventive public health campaigns focused on child nutrition and disease prevention.

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National Deworming Day 2026 Theme

The theme for National Deworming Day 2026 has not been officially announced yet by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The 2026 theme is expected to align the following initiatives:

- **Krimi Mukt Bharat Vision:** The programme consistently reflects India's goal of eliminating intestinal worm burden to protect children's nutrition, immunity and cognitive development nationwide.
- **Alignment with WHO Guidance:** The initiative follows [World Health Organization](#) recommendations on regular mass deworming in high risk regions.
- **Preventive Healthcare:** Themes strengthen the idea that deworming is preventive, even when children show no visible symptoms.
- **Community Participation:** Messaging encourages parents, teachers and frontline workers to ensure maximum coverage on the fixed day.

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National Deworming Day Feature

National Deworming Day includes structured planning, inter ministerial coordination and standardized drug administration to ensure nationwide coverage. The key features of the day are:

- **Fixed Day Biannual Programme:** Conducted every year on 10 February and 10 August to maintain regular deworming cycles in high risk populations.
- **Target Age Group:** Covers children and adolescents aged 1 to 19 years, including school going, Anganwadi enrolled and out of school children.
- **Free Albendazole Tablet Distribution:** WHO approved Albendazole 400 mg tablets are provided free, with half tablets for children aged 1 to 2 years.
- **School and Anganwadi Platform:** Tablets are administered after mid day meals under supervision of teachers and Anganwadi workers.
- **Mop Up Day Mechanism:** Children missed on the main day receive tablets during mop up rounds, such as on 16 February.
- **Multi Ministry Collaboration:** Implemented jointly by the Ministries of Health, Education and Women and Child Development.
- **Mass Drug Administration Approach:** Uses a preventive strategy rather than diagnosis based treatment to ensure broad protection.
- **NCDC Scientific Monitoring:** National Centre for Disease Control leads baseline and follow up STH prevalence surveys.
- **Expansion:** Expanded nationwide after the first phase reached 8.98 crore children across 11 States and UTs.

National Deworming Day Significance

National Deworming Day plays a critical role in improving child health indicators and reducing the long term disease burden linked to worm infections.

- **Large At-Risk Population Addressed:** Around 22 crore Indian children aged 1 to 14 years are estimated to be at risk of STH infections.
- **Prevention of Anaemia:** Worms suck blood and nutrients, directly contributing to iron deficiency anaemia in growing children.
- **Improved Nutritional Outcomes:** Deworming enhances nutrient absorption, supporting better weight gain and physical growth.
- **Cognitive and Learning Benefits:** Reduced worm load improves concentration, school attendance and academic performance.
- **STH Prevalence Reduction:** Follow up surveys in 14 States showed reduced prevalence compared to baseline levels.
- **State Level Impact:** States like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura recorded substantial reductions.
- **Equity in Healthcare Access:** Reaches children irrespective of socio economic background, including non enrolled populations.
- **Long Term Human Capital Gains:** Healthier children contribute to better productivity, education outcomes and national development.

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