



In this Issue

Supporting the Next Generation during Youth Month
June 2025



Raising awareness about Heart Rhythm Disorders
2-8 June 2025

World Environment Day
5 June 2025

World Food Safety Day
7 June 2025



Supporting the Next Generation During Youth Month

As we celebrate Youth Month this June, it's the perfect time to spotlight the unique health needs of young people aged 10-24 and how we can collectively support their wellbeing.

Young people today face a complex landscape of health challenges and opportunities. As parents, community members and health advocates, understanding these needs can help us provide better support during these formative years.

Key Health Priorities for Youth

- **Mental Wellbeing** - Mental health remains a top concern for young people. Approximately 1 in 7 adolescents experience mental health conditions, yet most go undetected and untreated[1]. Creating supportive environments where young people feel a comfortable discussing their emotions can make a significant difference in early identification and intervention.
- **Physical Activity** - Regular physical activity is crucial during adolescence, helping to build strong bones, muscles and cardiovascular health. The WHO recommends at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily for those aged 5-17[2]. Finding activities that young people enjoy can help establish lifelong healthy habits.
- **Nutrition and Healthy Eating** - Establishing good nutrition habits during youth creates a foundation for lifelong health. Adolescents have increased nutritional needs during growth spurts, requiring more calcium, iron and protein[3]. Balanced diets rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins support optimal development during these critical years.

- **Preventive Care** - Regular health check-ups during adolescence help identify potential health issues early. Vaccinations, vision screenings and dental care are essential during these growth years. Annual wellness visits provide opportunities for health education and discussion of age-appropriate health concerns.

Supporting Youth Health as a Community

Young people navigate health decisions with increasing independence while still needing guidance. Here are ways to provide balanced support:

- **Open Communication:** Create judgement-free spaces for discussing health concerns.
- **Digital Resources:** Direct young people to reputable health information sources.
- **Privacy Awareness:** Respect their growing need for confidentiality while ensuring safety.
- **Lead by Example:** Model healthy behaviours in your own life.

This youth month let's commit to supporting the unique health needs of the young people in our lives. By investing in youth health today, we're building a healthier future for everyone.

For more information about youth health resources in your community, contact your local health department or visit the World Health Organisation's adolescent health resources.

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Raising Awareness About Heart Rhythm Disorders

2 – 8 June 2025

World Heart Rhythm Week, observed from 2 – 8 June, is an annual global initiative organised by the Heart Rhythm Alliance. This important awareness week aims to shine a spotlight on heart rhythm disorders, particularly conditions like arrhythmias and atrial fibrillation, which affect millions of people worldwide.

What is World Heart Rhythm Week?

World Heart Rhythm Week is dedicated to increasing public knowledge about heart rhythm disorders. These conditions can range from harmless to life-threatening, but many people are unaware they have a heart rhythm problem until they experience a serious event.

The Heart Rhythm Alliance coordinates this global campaign to encourage people to "know their pulse" and understand the importance of heart rhythm health. Organisations, hospitals and community groups worldwide participate by hosting educational events, offering pulse check demonstrations and distributing information about heart rhythm conditions.

Why is World Heart Rhythm Week Important?

Heart rhythm disorders represent a significant global health challenge that often goes unrecognised. According to the World Heart Federation, cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death globally, with many of these deaths related to heart rhythm disorders:[2]

- **Hidden Impact:** Many people with heart rhythm disorders show no symptoms and remain undiagnosed until a serious cardiac event occurs.

- **Growing Prevalence:** As our population ages, heart rhythm disorders are becoming increasingly common. According to the Heart Rhythm Alliance, atrial fibrillation alone affects an estimated 33.5 million people worldwide.[1]
- **Early Detection:** Being aware of unusual heart rhythms can lead to earlier diagnosis and better management of these conditions.
- **Community Education:** The week provides an opportunity for people to learn about heart rhythm health in accessible community settings.

This Year's Focus

Each year, World Heart Rhythm Week highlights specific aspects of heart rhythm health. This year's campaign emphasises the importance of pulse awareness and recognising potential symptoms of heart rhythm disorders.

Participating in World Heart Rhythm Week is a simple yet meaningful way to support heart health awareness in our communities. Whether it's attending an informational session or simply taking a moment to learn about heart rhythm health, every action contributes to greater public understanding of these important health conditions.

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World Environment Day

5 June 2025

Celebrating Our Planet

World Environment Day emerged from the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden—the first major international gathering focused on environmental issues. The UN designated June 5th as an annual global platform for positive environmental action, with the first official celebration taking place in 1974 under the slogan "Only One Earth."

Why It Matters Today

In our increasingly interconnected world, World Environment Day serves as a vital reminder that environmental challenges transcend borders. Each year focuses on a specific theme addressing pressing ecological concerns—from plastic pollution and air quality to biodiversity conservation.

The day encourages governments, businesses, communities and individuals to implement sustainable practices and advocate for policy changes that protect our planet. It reminds us that environmental stewardship isn't just about grand gestures but also about the small, everyday choices we make.

Taking Part

This World Environment Day, consider how your actions impact the environment. Whether it's reducing single-use plastics, conserving energy, supporting environmentally responsible businesses, or participating in local clean-up initiatives, everyone can contribute to a healthier planet.

As we face unprecedented environmental challenges, from climate change to biodiversity loss, World Environment Day offers an opportunity to reflect on our relationship with nature and renew our commitment to sustainable living—not just for June 5th, but for every day that follows.

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World Food Safety Day

7 June 2025

As we approach 7 June, we recognise World Food Safety Day - an important annual observance focused on preventing, detecting and managing foodborne risks. This year's theme is "Food Safety: Everyone's Business," emphasising our shared responsibility in maintaining food safety.

Why Food Safety Matters

Food safety isn't just about avoiding illness - it's essential for food security, human health, economic prosperity and sustainable development. Unsafe food creates a cycle of disease and malnutrition that particularly affects vulnerable populations like infants, young children and the elderly.

Food Safety and Risk Management

Proper food safety measures help manage risks in our food supply. From production to consumption, multiple stakeholders play vital roles in ensuring food remains safe throughout its journey to your table. Effective risk management strategies help prevent costly incidents and protect public health.

Simple Practices for Food Safety

Businesses and individuals can take practical steps to ensure food safety:

- Maintain proper hygiene and cleanliness in food preparation areas
- Store raw and cooked foods separately
- Ensure thorough cooking at appropriate temperatures
- Use safe water and raw materials

Food Safety for Businesses

Food businesses face unique challenges in maintaining safety standards throughout their operations. Those with comprehensive risk management systems can better handle food safety incidents, including product recalls, compliance issues and business interruption costs.

Join the Movement

World Food Safety Day reminds us that food safety is indeed everyone's business. By prioritising food safety in our daily practices and business operations, we contribute to better health outcomes and more resilient food systems.

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- [1] Chugh SS, Havmoeller R, Narayanan K, et al. Worldwide epidemiology of atrial fibrillation: a Global Burden of Disease 2010 Study. *Circulation*. 2014;129(8):837-847. doi:10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.113.005119
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