



Family Digest 62

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World Mosquito Day 20th August

World Mosquito Day, observed annually on 20th August, is a commemoration of British doctor Sir Ronald Ross's discovery in 1897 that female *Anopheline* mosquitoes transmit malaria. This discovery provided the first evidence that mosquitoes transmit malaria to humans.¹ The mosquito is the world's deadliest animal, and it remains one of the biggest global health threats of the 21st century. Much of the malaria burden around the world is concentrated on the African continent.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 435 000 people die of malaria every year. Not only this, but there are believed to be approximately 219 million cases of malaria every year across the world.² Target Malaria Uganda, a consortium based at the Uganda Virus Research Institute, warns that mosquitoes have gradually evolved, and that a newly-discovered invasive species in Africa is hindering efforts to control these insects.³ World Mosquito Day aims to raise awareness about the various diseases that mosquitoes can transmit, such as malaria, yellow fever, dengue, and chikungunya. It is a reminder of the importance of raising awareness about the dangers of mosquito-borne diseases and the ongoing efforts to combat these deadly pests. It also honours the efforts of those social service providers, medical professionals, and other individuals dedicated to combating mosquito-borne diseases.⁴ Furthermore, it serves to promote preventive measures, including vaccination and the use of insect repellents for the efficient prevention and treatment of the disease.

The theme of World Mosquito Day 2024 is, *'Accelerating the fight against malaria for a more equitable world'*. This year's theme emphasises the need to close the gaps in malaria treatment, diagnosis, and prevention. Numerous lives can be saved and problems prevented with a prompt diagnosis and treatment plan.⁵ Protective measures include vector control (insecticide-treated nets, indoor residual spraying), preventive medicines (seasonal malaria chemotherapy) and vaccines.⁶ Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) highlights the need "for continued investment to drive innovation and continue expanding the antimalarial toolbox, acknowledging how climate change can impact the malaria landscape and calling for equitable access to life-saving prevention and treatment tools".⁷

The articles below expand on the above.

<https://www.mmv.org/events/world-mosquito-day-2024>

<https://english.news.cn/20240819/3f690fea5bec4064af2518697321c137/c.html>

https://www.business-standard.com/health/world-mosquito-day-2024-date-theme-history-significance-and-more-124082000912_1.html

<https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/world-mosquito-day/>

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- ¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Mosquito_Day
 - ² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6961385/>
 - ³ <https://english.news.cn/20240819/3f690fea5bec4064af2518697321c137/c.html>
 - ⁴ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/world-mosquito-day-what-is-the-theme-for-2024-know-date-history-significance-and-more-101724130396416.html>
 - ⁵ https://www.business-standard.com/health/world-mosquito-day-2024-date-theme-history-significance-and-more-124082000912_1.html
 - ⁶ <https://www.mmv.org/events/world-mosquito-day-2024>
 - ⁷ <https://www.mmv.org/events/world-mosquito-day-2024>

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