



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Department of Health Research – Ministry Health & Family Welfare
Government of India

Press Release

Collector's Edition of Indian Journal of Medical Research commemorating 150th Birth anniversary of Gandhi

*The issue showcases India's health research advancements that embody
Gandhian principles*

25th March 2019, New Delhi

To commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has developed a collector's edition of Indian Journal of Medical Research (IJMR) focusing on Gandhian principles of health. This special edition titled, '*Gandhi & Health @150*' was launched in Dharamshala by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 20 March 2019 to kick off a two-day symposium (25-26 March 2019) in New Delhi, organised by ICMR and the National Gandhi Museum.

This special edition of IJMR details the medical legacy of Gandhi, his health profile and his experiments on health, based on articles published and health records that are available. It also highlights ICMR's contributions in areas that are relevant to Gandhian principles, such as importance of hygiene and sanitation (relevant to diseases like cholera, malaria, TB and leprosy), living a disciplined life and the role of physical fitness with meditation (relevant to lifestyle diseases, mental health and the youth) and balanced diet (relevant to nutrition). This edition also illustrates how ICMR has focused its research on areas that Gandhi was passionate about – environment, lifestyle diseases and social behaviour.

Releasing the edition in Dharamshala, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, "Mahatma Gandhi was a man with extraordinary qualities. His motivation to solve the problems of society and steer the freedom movement through the path of truth and non-violence is inspired by his physical and emotional well being. Gandhi Ji's life shows us that by dedicating one's life to others makes a person emotionally and physically strong. Honouring Gandhi ji's philosophy on health will not only inform the present society on improving the well-being of people but will also help them imbibe a lifestyle that is disciplined and rewarding." he added.

At the symposium Dr. V.K. Paul, Member, NITI Aayog quoted Gandhi from his book 'Key to Health', "Whilst it is true that man cannot live without air and water, the thing that nourishes the body is food. Hence the saying, food is life." Dr. Paul opined, "Gandhi's principles of nutritious food being key to good health form the ethos of the research and work undertaken by both ICMR and NITI Aayog in nutrition. It is our goal to ensure there is access to nutritious food for all within the country." Dr. Paul also suggested a push in the direction of Research in Integrative Medicine.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia said, "Mahatma Gandhi played a transformative role in taking the message of preventive and promotive health to the masses. Just like everything else about him, the Mahatma's messages were couched in simplicity and yet had universal appeal. This edition of Indian Journal of Medical Research has been brought out at an opportune moment and will surely aid in promoting lifestyles choices based on the principles of healthy living with a focus on hygiene, a balanced diet and exercise expounded by Mahatma Gandhi, which remain relevant today. If followed, these can go a long way in realising the vision of a healthy India."

Dr. K. Vijay Raghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, elucidated, "In our endeavour to evolve policies, strategies and missions for the development of the nation, the principles and teachings of the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi should become the guiding light. The release of 'Gandhi & Health @150' is a step in that direction and will definitely create a positive impact in the lives of all those who read it."

Prof (Dr.) Balram Bhargava, Secretary, Department of Health Research and Director General, ICMR stated, "The Indian Council of Medical Research was set up in 1911. In a journey, that has spanned more than a century, this institution has made immense contribution towards various disease control programmes and has tried to follow the path shown by the Mahatma Gandhi, by touching and impacting the lives of millions of Indians. Mahatma Gandhi had spearheaded many revolutions in our country and ICMR has embodied his values and principles in its health research to improve the health and well-being of the country. On the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, ICMR has brought out this edition as a mark of a tribute to the man who sacrificed his life for the service of the poor and downtrodden."

About ICMR: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. ICMR's research priorities align with the National health priorities. These efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population. ICMR promotes biomedical research in the country through intramural as well as extramural research.

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About IJMR: The Indian Journal of Medical Research (IJMR) is one of the oldest medical Journals in Asia and was started in the year 1913. IJMR has international circulation and publishes original communications of biomedical research that advances medical science to educate the journal readers. The IJMR is published monthly and is being indexed and abstracted by all major global current awareness and alerting services. It publishes peer reviewed quality biomedical research in the form of original research articles, review articles, short papers, and short notes.

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Interesting facts of Mahatma Gandhi's Health

- Gandhi used to walk around 18 km every day for nearly 40 years. During his campaign from 1913 to 1948, he walked around 79,000 km, which is equivalent to walking around the Earth twice.
- In the book 'Key to Health' Gandhi said "experience has taught me that to be perfect fit, vegetarian diet must include milk and milk-products such as curd, butter, ghee, etc."
- Gandhi suffered from high blood pressure and as per the health file of Gandhi (1924-47) his blood pressure readings were as high as 194/130 and 220/110 (on 26.10 1937 and 19.02.1940).
- Based on the health reports of Gandhi his arterial elasticity was diminished due to arterial constriction, but the condition of his myocardium was stated to be good (Dated 27 and 28 October 1937)
- Gandhi's eye test indicated fundus oculi (from 26 February 1939) except for changes in the lenses, his eyes were otherwise healthy.
- Gandhi's biochemical investigation done on 19 January 1936, 9 December 1937 and 5 April 1938 indicated his blood sugar level was at 41, 71.4 and 0.115% (115) which were below the normal level (80-120).
- Gandhi was a firm believer in the principle that a healthy mind keeps the body healthy and he stressed on the importance of a balanced diet, natural cure and physical fitness.
- Gandhi strictly preached against the intake of tea and coffee along with drugs, tobacco and alcohol.