

Ayush-based Nutrition Solutions to be highlighted in the Poshan Maah observation

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Nutrition solutions based on traditional healthcare wisdom will be an integral part of the *Poshan Maah* celebrations during the month of September 2020. This will further accelerate various activities under *POSHAN Abhiyaan*, while adhering to COVID-19 protocols.

POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is the Prime Minister's overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment, and was launched by him on 8th March, 2018. The programme has special focus on reducing the level of stunting, under-nutrition and low birth weight in children, and anaemia in adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers as well as children. All the traditional medicine systems of India place emphasis on food and diet, and have sophisticated knowledge on the subject. This body of time-tested knowledge will be scientifically adapted to add momentum to the *POSHAN Abhiyaan*. The role earmarked for Ayush-based solutions in *POSHAN Abhiyaan* was mentioned in the joint communication sent to Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs by the Secretaries of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Women & Child Development on 7th September, 2020.

One important part of *POSHAN Abhiyaan* is the early identification of children suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). This early identification is important for timely initiation of treatment and minimizing the risk of complications. Therefore, during *Rashtriya Poshan Maah* this year, a drive for identification and treatment of children with SAM will be undertaken.

Experts from indigenous systems of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani will be co-opted to provide guidance on good nutrition, complementary feeding etc. The Ministry of AYUSH will initiate and coordinate special measures for this, through the network of its Autonomous Bodies as well as through Stake-holders like Ayush Educational Institutions. The Ministry will customise its ongoing awareness campaign during the month by focusing on the theme "*Ahara*" which is directly related to the subject of nutrition, and reach out to the public with targeted messages.

To strengthen the community support to this drive, *Poshan* Panchayats will be organized where all members of Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC) and public will participate to discuss, ongoing activities, health and nutrition education, and remedial measures being taken. The Ministry of AYUSH will also take special efforts in promoting the village level activities by roping in relevant stake-holders.

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