



World Polio Day

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World Polio Day was established by **Rotary International** on **24th October** to celebrate the **birth of Jonas Salk**, who developed a **vaccine against poliomyelitis**.

- The establishment of the **Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) in 1988** reduced polio worldwide by **99%**.
- World Polio Day (2019) marked a milestone in polio eradication as the **independent Global Commission for the Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication (GCC)** has declared **Wild Polio Virus type 3** to be **globally eradicated**.

It follows the eradication of smallpox and wild poliovirus type 2.

Wild Polio Virus type 3

- There are three individual and immunologically distinct wild poliovirus strains: Wild Polio Virus type 1 (WPV1), Wild Polio Virus type 2 (WPV2) and Wild Polio Virus type 3 (WPV3).
- **Symptomatically**, all three strains are **identical**, in that they cause irreversible paralysis or even death.
- But there are **genetic and virological differences**, which make these three strains three **separate viruses** that must each be eradicated individually.
- WPV2 and WPV3 have been eradicated globally but **WPV1 remains** in circulation in just two countries namely, **Afghanistan and Pakistan**.

Polio

- Polio is a crippling and potentially fatal **viral infectious** disease.
- There is **no cure**, but **can be prevented** through immunization.
- The strategy to eradicate polio is therefore based on preventing infection by immunizing every child until transmission stops.

- There are two types of vaccines to prevent infection.
 - **OPV (Oral Polio Vaccine):** It is given orally as a birth dose for institutional deliveries, then primary three doses at 6, 10 & 14 weeks and one booster dose at 16-24 months of age.
 - **Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV):** It is introduced as an additional dose along with the 3rd dose of DPT under the universal immunization programme (UIP).
- **India** received **polio-free certification** by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** in 2014.
 - **Eradication of a disease** refers to the complete and permanent worldwide reduction to zero new cases of an infectious disease through deliberate efforts. If a disease has been eradicated, **no further control measures are required**. For eg- **smallpox has been eradicated**.
 - However, **elimination of a disease** refers to **reduction to zero** (or a very low defined target rate) of new cases of an infectious disease in a **defined geographical area**. Elimination requires **continued measures to prevent re-establishment** of disease transmission. **Yaws and Leprosy** have been eliminated from India.

Source: TH