

International Day of Older Persons

Introduction:

Older people contribute greatly to society in a number of ways, either through volunteer work or by imparting their expertise and knowledge about life to younger generations, and to honor and highlight these invaluable contributions, every year, we celebrate the International Day of Older Persons. This day aims to raise awareness about the issues and challenges older people face in today's world especially since there are more than 600 million people aged over 60 (2012), and this number is expected to rise to 2 billion in 50 years.

Health messages:

- Aging is a natural biological process that cannot be stopped or prevented; however, it can be slowed down and some bodily weaknesses can be delayed.
- Aging is not a disease, and with simple care and attention many problems and accidents can be avoided.
- It is recommended to exercise daily and to limit the time spent sitting or lying down. Walking is considered one of the best ways to exercise.
- It is preferable to stick to a well-balanced nutritious diet and maintain a healthy weight that is within the normal limits.
- Personal hygiene is essential for the elderly.
- It is advisable to avoid isolation and to stay in contact with relatives and friends to prevent developing any mental illnesses.
- It is essential to avoid smoking at all stages of life.
- Switching from a sitting position to a standing position should be done slowly to avoid sudden dizziness.
- Medications should not be taken without consulting a doctor.
- Older people are prone to accidents that often lead to fractures and sprains.
- Two-thirds of the accidents suffered by older people occur in their own homes, such as falling on the ground or down the stairs, which causes fractures in the arms or legs. Such accidents are one of the main causes for disability among the elderly.
- Some types of disabilities could be treated in a way that limits dangerous accidents.

- Good lighting should be provided to limit accidents that occur in hallways.
- It is preferable to avoid placing carpets or plastic items in hallways so that it does not hinder the movement of older people.
- It is advisable to avoid wearing long and loose clothing that could make it difficult to transition from a sitting position to a standing position.
- Home furniture should be arranged in a way that does not hinder the movement of older people.
- Accidents that occur in bathrooms and staircases could be avoided by providing adequate lighting, good ventilation and assisting tools.

The objectives of the international day:

- Promote the rights enshrined in the Declaration and what it means in the daily lives of older persons.
- Raise the visibility of older people as participating members of society committed to improving the enjoyment of human rights in many areas of life and not just those that affect them immediately.
- Reflect on progress and challenges in ensuring full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons.
- Engage broad audiences across the world and mobilize people for human rights at all stages of life.

The Date of the international day:

Worldwide October 1, 2018

Locally 21 Muharram 1440 AH

The theme of the international day

“Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions”.

Older human rights champions today were born around the time of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. They are as diverse as the society in which they live: from older people advocating for human rights at the grass root and community level to high profile figures on the international stage. Each and every one demands equal respect and acknowledgement for their dedication and commitment to contributing to a world free from fear.

What better way to celebrate this Day than by celebrating the older people around the world who dedicate their lives to championing human rights?

Target group:

- Older persons of both genders.
- Government institutions that focus on providing aid for older persons.
- Non-governmental organizations and associations.
- Individuals and families interested in caring for older persons.
- Individuals working in the fields of health care and rehabilitation for older people.
- Health workers in health centers.

Sources:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/international-day-of-older-persons-homepage.html>

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