



OBESITY: An ongoing pandemic

WORLD DIGESTIVE HEALTH DAY — 29 May 2021



WORLD
GASTROENTEROLOGY
ORGANISATION



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Marissa Lopez, CAE

Executive Director, WGO

World Gastroenterology Organisation

+1 414-918-9798

info@worldgastroenterology.org

Together with IFSO, WGO Celebrates World Digestive Health Day by Raising Awareness of Obesity through a Multi-faceted, Yearlong Campaign

Milwaukee, WI - April 1, 2021 – Every 29 May, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) and initiates a worldwide public health campaign that focuses on a particular digestive or liver disorder in order to increase awareness of prevention, prevalence, diagnosis, management, and treatment of the disease or disorder worldwide.

This World Digestive Health Day, WGO, together with the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO) have partnered to bring awareness to the 2021 theme entitled **Obesity: An Ongoing Pandemic**. This yearlong campaign will harness the collective power of individuals, organizations, and partners to improve digestive health worldwide. To kickoff this campaign, WGO and IFSO will launch a live webinar event on Saturday, 29 May 2021. More information will be provided in due course.

About This Year's Theme

Led by Co-Chairs Profs. Lilian Kow (Australia); Reem Sharaiha (USA); and James Toouli (Australia), the goal for WDHD 2021 is to raise awareness of obesity and the impact on the development of comorbidities and subsequently the effect on life expectancy, which is as devastating as any infectious pandemic. The aim is to raise awareness of the disease and its management in countries that make up the membership of both WGO and IFSO.

Through a multi-faceted WDHD 2021 campaign, WGO and IFSO seek to:

- Raise awareness of the role obesity plays in health, disease and its management, especially in countries that make up the memberships of WGO and IFSO.
- Provide gastroenterologists, surgeons, nutritionists their patients, and the lay public, with an understanding of the latest basic and clinical research in the pathogenesis, investigation and treatment of obesity.

- Translate the results of research into clinical practice and facilitate communication between physicians, allied health professionals, healthcare payers, and the public.
- Provide simple messages for the public in order to assist them in understanding how obesity affects one's daily life and its importance in one's health.
- Provide the lay public general information that may be used to discuss with their health care provider potential management of obesity that incorporates appropriate investigations, treatment, appropriate dietary and lifestyle advice relevant to their condition and circumstances.

“WDHD for 2021 addresses the ongoing pandemic of obesity with the aim of enhancing awareness for both professionals and the public on how we may address this problem. With an awareness campaign [we will] provide education on prevention, and when that fails, provide the most up-to-date recommendations on treatment.” Dr. James Toouli, past WGO President and WDHD Co-Chair.

The WDHD Steering Committee will provide global perspective and expertise on the management of Obesity guiding the course of the campaign and the development of the educational and training materials, in collaboration with WGO and IFSO Member Societies, which will define this global initiative and provide the resources to sustain the effort throughout the year.

GET INVOLVED

Join WGO and IFSO and organize an event of your own! Past events organized have included lectures, virtual sessions, webinars, podcasts, infographics, press conferences, symposia, walkathons, patient awareness camps, creating a World Digestive Health Week, and much more. We invite you to take action and celebrate!

Additionally, webpages devoted to the WDHD campaign have been developed, which consist of tools and resources for the healthcare professional and general public.

ABOUT WORLD DIGESTIVE HEALTH DAY

The first World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) was held on 29 May 2005. Since then, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) annually celebrates World Digestive Health Day by initiating a yearlong, worldwide, public health campaign through its 117 WGO Member Societies which reach over 50,000 individuals worldwide, WGO Training Centers, Regional Affiliate Associations, and other WGO global partners. Each year focuses upon a particular digestive disease or disorder in order to increase general public awareness of prevention, prevalence, diagnosis, management, and treatment of the disease or disorder.

ABOUT THE WORLD GASTROENTEROLOGY ORGANISATION

Formed in 1935 and incorporated in 1958, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) is a federation of 117 member societies and 4 regional associations of gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy, and other related disciplines, representing over 50,000 individuals worldwide, focusing on the improvement of standards in gastroenterology training and education on a global scale. WGO's mission is to promote, to the general public and healthcare professional alike, an awareness of the worldwide prevalence and optimal care of gastrointestinal and liver disorders, and to improve care of these disorders, through the provision of high quality, accessible and independent education and training.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR THE SURGERY OF OBESITY AND METABOLIC DISORDERS

The International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO) is a federation composed of 72 national associations representing 10,000 bariatric surgeons and integrated health professionals such as nurse, practitioners, dietitians, nutritionists, psychologists, internists and anesthesiologists, involved in the treatment of morbidly obese patients; in addition to individual members from countries that have not yet formed a national association. IFSO's mission is to unify the Global Scientific, Surgical and Integrated Health Communities, for the purpose of dissemination of knowledge, collaboration and establishing universal standards of care for the treatment of individuals with adiposity-based chronic disease.

To learn more about the WDHD 2021 campaign, please visit www.wdhd2021.org, the WGO and IFSO websites, (www.worldgastroenterology.org and www.ifso.com, respectively), or follow the #WDHD2021 hashtag on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

ABOUT WGO

Established in 1958, WGO is a global federation of 117 gastroenterology and hepatology member societies and four regional associations representing over 50,000 individual members worldwide. WGO focuses on improving education and training standards in gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy and other related disciplines globally.

Inform. Educate. Train. Advocate.