

# Empowering Lives: World ORS Day 2023

"Stay in the Game, Stay Hydrated with ORS!"

World Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) Day, celebrated globally on July 29 every year, was observed with great enthusiasm at Gouri Devi Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital in Durgapur. The Departments of Pediatrics and Community Medicine played pivotal roles in taking the initiative and organizing the event, focusing on creating awareness about ORS and its life-saving potential.

ORS, an accessible, acceptable, and affordable entity, can be made and used without the need for formal medical education. It has been recognized worldwide as a vital tool to combat dehydration, particularly in regions facing health challenges and limited resources. The event aimed to emphasize the significance of ORS in saving lives across the globe, especially in areas with limited access to proper healthcare facilities.

During the celebration, participants and attendees learned about the history of ORS, which dates back to the 1960s when researchers at the Johns Hopkins University developed a simple solution to address dehydration in children suffering from acute diarrhoea. The ground-breaking discovery revolutionized global health practices, enabling millions of lives to be saved in areas with limited medical resources.

As part of the awareness and celebration programme, a poster competition was held, where MBBS students and nurses participated with great zeal, showcasing their creativity and understanding of ORS. The participants were given three thought-provoking themes: "Home-based Alternatives of ORS," "Zinc and ORS: Complementary Partners," and "ORS: The Hero in Health."



During the competition, the participants presented innovative ideas and solutions, illustrating how ORS can be prepared and administered effectively at home. They highlighted the significance of easily accessible, home-based alternatives of ORS, particularly in rural areas or during emergencies when immediate medical attention might not be available.



Another theme focused on the complementary benefits of combining ORS with zinc supplementation. Participants elaborated on the role of zinc in reducing the duration and severity of diarrhoea, enhancing the effectiveness of ORS in restoring electrolyte balance and preventing dehydration-related complications.



Under the theme "ORS: The Hero in Health," participants highlighted real-life instances where ORS played a crucial role in saving lives, especially in underprivileged communities and regions affected by natural disasters or outbreaks of waterborne diseases.



The presentations by Dr. Ankita Banerjee, Assistant Professor of Community Medicine, and Dr. Debanjana Basak, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, added valuable insights to the event. Dr. Banerjee emphasized the importance of community-based initiatives to promote ORS usage and educate people about its preparation and administration. She stressed that empowering individuals with the knowledge of ORS can significantly reduce mortality rates, particularly in children under the age of five.

Dr. Basak shared case studies and success stories from her experience in pediatric care, illustrating how timely ORS administration had saved the lives of critically ill children suffering from severe dehydration. She highlighted the need for continuous research and advocacy to improve the availability and accessibility of ORS in underserved regions.

The event was well-received by the medical community, staff, and students, who actively participated in the activities, making it a resounding success in promoting awareness about ORS and its life-saving potential. The celebration not only served as a tribute to the medical breakthrough of ORS but also encouraged future healthcare professionals to prioritize the use of this simple yet powerful solution in medical practice.