

Fortnight To Control Diarrhoea Underway In Punjab

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Chandigarh,

Diarrhoea and Pneumonia are the two leading causes of mortality in children below the age of five years. Diarrhoea is a very common problem in the children under five. It is a condition in which children lose valuable fluids, salts, and sugars, which can cause shock to vital organs. To decrease the number of diarrheal deaths, Intensified Diarrhoea Control Fortnight (IDCF) is celebrated at

national level every year. Health and Family Welfare Department Punjab is celebrating this fortnight from 19 July to 02 August 2021 in the state.

Divulging more details about this fortnight Director Health services (Family Welfare) Dr. Andesh Kang said that on the directions of Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu we have initiated this fortnight in the monsoon season as cases of diarrhoea start appearing in this season, therefore this fortnight is strategically planned to educate masses and treat diarrhoea patients timely. She said that under this fortnight, activities like visit of ASHAs in all households in villages with children below five years of age for pre-positioning the ORS, benefits of usage of ORS and Zinc to be explained in detail to the family members, meetings of Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees, are performed at village level. These activities hold importance as it is often observed that during critical stages of diarrhoea, ORS is not available in the households when required at the time of diarrhoea so providing ORS packets to households saves life of patient.

She further said that all health facilities are already informed to place ORS and Zinc corners where demonstration on the way to prepare the ORS solution and these corners will also administer ORS and Zinc to children who are in need of treatment during diarrhoea. With a focus on demand generation, an important component of the IDCF is IEC activities that shall not only create awareness but also generate demand.

She added that intensified community awareness campaigns on hygiene and promotion of ORS and Zinc therapy will be conducted in the state. She said that combination of ORS and Zinc has been found to be the most cost-effective intervention to prevent deaths due to diarrhoea and has been recognised as one of the best practices globally.

Program officer Dr. Inderdeep Kaur stated that whole health system is still fighting with Corona virus but health department has strategically planned this fortnight for safety of the public, it also becomes important for public to maintain hygiene practices because severe diarrhea can also become a leading factor in deteriorating the condition of any Corona positive patient.

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