

DID YOU KNOW...

APRIL 2ND IS

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY



What is World Autism Awareness Day?

World Autism Awareness Day is recognized across the world every year in April. This year, 2026, marks the 18th annual Autism Awareness Day. Starting on April 2nd and throughout the duration of the month, organizations like Autism Speaks focus on spreading awareness and providing opportunities to increase understanding, acceptance, and support of individuals with autism.

What is Autism?

According to Autism Speaks, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) refers to a range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication. Autism presents differently for all individuals that are affected, and there are many different types. Additionally, some individuals who have ASD may need significant support in their daily lives while others are more independent.

What Causes Autism?

There are many causes of ASD. Research suggests that the risk of ASD developing is increased by a combination of genetic influences and environmental influences. However, not every individual exposed to these influences will develop ASD.

Potential Genetic Influences:

- Family history of autism
- Changes in your genes
- Monogenetic disorders like fragile X syndrome (FXS)

Potential Environmental Influences:

- Advanced parental age
- Prenatal exposure to air pollution or certain pesticides
- Extreme prematurity or low birth weight
- Birth complications leading to periods of oxygen deprivation to the baby's brain
- Maternal obesity, diabetes, or immune system disorders

Symptoms of Autism

Both children and adults may be diagnosed with ASD. According to the CDC, 1 in 31 children and 1 in 45 adults are estimated to be affected by ASD in the United States. Symptoms for children may vary when compared to symptoms for adults. Common symptoms include but are not limited to having trouble with:

- Starting and taking turns in conversations
- Understanding other people's body language, gestures, and facial expressions
- Feeling overwhelmed in social situations
- Making eye contact
- Understanding boundaries and personal space

Diagnosis

To be evaluated for ASD, individuals are encouraged to seek out the advice and observations of psychiatrists or psychologists that specialize in ASD. An accurate diagnosis requires multiple visits so behavior can be evaluated over time. The provider will utilize guidelines in the DSM-5 to make a diagnosis.

Sources

- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/world-autism-awareness-day>
- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>
- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-causes-autism>
- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-symptoms>
- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/adult-autism-diagnosis>

DID YOU KNOW...

APRIL 7TH IS

WORLD HEALTH DAY



What is World Health Day?

World Health Day was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is celebrated annually to draw attention to a specific health topic of concern to people around the world. The observed date, April 7th, honors the anniversary of the founding of the WHO in 1948. The theme for 2026 is “Together for health. Stand with Science.” On April 7th, 2026, a year-long campaign will launch which celebrates the power of scientific collaboration to protect the health of people and the environment.

How to Participate in this Year's Campaign

To participate in the “Together for health. Stand with Science” campaign, the WHO encourages people everywhere to celebrate scientific achievements, sharing personal stories of how science improves lives, and joining the global conversation by using **#StandWithScience** and **#WorldHealthDay** on social media.

Notable Health-Related Scientific Achievements

Thanks to ongoing scientific research and innovation, the possibility of our lives being healthier, happier, and longer have increased exponentially. See below for some of the significant health-related scientific achievements:

- **Epidemiology:** The study of the patterns and causes of disease in a population; Fathered by John Snow during the 1854 London cholera outbreak
- **Anesthesia:** A medication which prevents pain, awareness, and discomfort during medical procedures; Discovered and demonstrated by Dr. William Thomas Green Morton in Massachusetts in 1846
- **DNA Structure:** The double helix structure revealed how genetic information is stored, replicated, and passed down; Discovered by Rosalind Franklin, James Watson & Francis Crick in 1953

World Health Day is not only a great reason to celebrate scientific breakthroughs, but also to evaluate and reflect on your overall health and wellbeing. Review the health and wellbeing resources below that are available to help you get started on your health journey.

Utopia WellCare

Through Utopia WellCare, you can receive one-on-one virtual consultations with Board Certified Registered Dietitians. Consultations are covered under preventive care for employees enrolled in the Medical Plan and offers **6 FREE visits**.

Ready to Get Started?



Download the Utopia WellCare mobile app today and scan the QR code for more information or email

info@utopiawellcare.com.

Aetna Healthy Lifestyle Wellness Coaching

For employees enrolled in the Aetna Medical plan, Aetna Healthy Lifestyle Wellness Coaching is an additional resource to aid in achieving healthier lifestyle. Services include things like nutritional coaching. Call **866-213-0153** to meet one-on-one with a Wellness Coach at **NO** cost to you for up to seven calls.

Sources

- <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day>
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2026/04/07/default-calendar/world-health-day-2026-together-for-health-stand-with-science>
- <https://www.worldwidecancerresearch.org/cancer-and-research-information/understanding-discovery-research/7-incredible-medical-breakthroughs-that-changed-the-world/>