

# International Self-Care Day

 [isfglobal.org/international-self-care-day/](https://isfglobal.org/international-self-care-day/)

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International Self-Care Day (ISD), on 24 July each year, provides a focus and opportunity to raise the profile of healthy lifestyle self-care programmes around the world. ISD is a device developed by the International Self-Care Foundation to promote self-care as a vital foundation of health. ISD has been running since 2011. It provides a media-friendly forum and a focus for individuals and groups to (independently) promote self-care in their organisation or community.

All stakeholders in health are invited to use International Self-Care Day in responsible ways that progress the cause of healthy lifestyles and wellness. ISF is pleased to provide support to groups and organisations wishing to conduct public health programmes consistent with these objectives. ISF requests that groups and organisations that undertake public health programmes linked to ISD provide a summary report of the programmes, for future reference and potential deployment in other countries.

## The ISD Date

The International Self-Care Day, 24 July, symbolises that the benefits of self-care are experienced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In other words, the benefits of self-care are life-long and do not just relate to a single day. ISD on 24 July simply provides a good focus and opportunity to publicise or report on self-care in action programmes. Programme organisers may work around July 24 as convenient, for example in 2014 for practical convenience organising events on the third Sunday of July.

Each year ISF proposes a general theme for International Self-Care Day. For 24 July 2017, the theme was 'Get better with Self-Care'. For 24 July 2018, the theme was 'Feel Good, 7/24'. Since 2019 there has been a choice of themes which can be used as appropriate:

- Self-Care is for Life.
- Get Better with Self-Care
- Treat yourself to better health

2020 is the start of a new decade for self-care, so in addition to previous themes the following can be used:

- Self-Care by all, for all
- The Self-Care 2020's
- Self-care for all. A New Decade

Since 2011 self-care activities linked to ISD have been organised around the world, in countries as far apart as Australia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland,

Tanzania, the United States, the United Kingdom and Vietnam. Some countries – the UK and Canada – have organised self-care weeks.

ISD-related activities have been focused on youth (e.g. a poster design competition, mob flash dance, and concerts), seniors (community involvement programmes, physical examination programmes), the general public (public lectures, expert advice, sponsored public walks, football and golf matches, tai chi classes), occupational health, pharmacy (poster campaign, pharmacy manager training), research (on self-care habits and behaviour), and the media (media events, newspaper and journal articles).

We are delighted that the Senate of the United States agreed a Resolution to designate July 24 as International Self-Care Day – see Senate Resolution 515 of the 113th Congress. In 2019, as in previous years, Canadian Prime Minister Mr Justin Trudeau extended “my warmest greetings to everyone marking International Self-Care Day” (see <http://selfcare.ca/self-care-day/> ).

Most notably, in 2019 the World Health Organisation announced a “Self-Care Month” starting on 24 June and ending on 24 July to coincide with International Self-Care Day. This was to allow for regional and national level initiatives by WHO and partners to be highlighted. In 2020 WHO again launched self-care month from 24 June to promote research and dialogue across Regions and with partners as WHO establishes a community of practice for self-care.

ISF’s ultimate aim is for ISD to be formally recognised by the United Nations as an official commemorative day, which would encourage further participation.