



Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026: Lecture on Dietary Diversity and Adequate Protein Organised at MDNIY

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Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of Ayush, organised the inaugural programme of the 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026, highlighting the importance of dietary diversity, healthy eating practices and adequate protein intake. Organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, the programme focused on informed dietary choices and adequate nutrition.

A nutrition pledge was administered during the programme under the leadership of Dr. Jyoti Keswani, Director (Additional Charge), MDNIY and Chief Patron of the event. Dr. Keswani highlighted the importance of greater public awareness about nutritious dietary practices and healthy lifestyles.

An expert lecture on “Dietary Diversity and Adequate Protein” was delivered by Dr. Swati Jain, Scientist ‘D’, ICMR-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research (ICMR-NICPR). She emphasised that protein adequacy should be considered as part of a balanced and diverse diet.

Dr. Jain highlighted the role of protein in tissue repair, immunity, muscle maintenance and the production of enzymes and hormones. Referring to the ICMR-NIN Nutrient Requirements for Indians, she noted that the safe protein allowance for healthy adults is 0.83 g per kg body weight per day when the diet contains high-quality protein, and 1.0 g per kg per day for predominantly cereal-based diets with lower protein quality. She also noted that protein requirements vary with age, body size, physiological state, physical activity and health status.

Emphasising dietary diversity, Dr. Jain encouraged inclusion of pulses, dairy, soy, nuts and seeds along with cereals. She cited traditional food combinations such as dal-rice, roti-chana, idli-sambar, dosa-sambar and khichdi as practical examples of complementary protein sources. She also highlighted affordable protein-containing foods such as sattu, dal, roasted chana, peanuts and soy.

Dr. Jain noted that protein intake should be distributed across meals rather than concentrated in a single meal. For individuals practising Yoga, she emphasised that overall daily protein intake and a balanced diet are more important than focusing exclusively on a post-exercise “protein window”.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Khushbu Jain, Assistant Professor (Biochemistry), MDNIY, and conducted by Dr. Pawan Kumar, Assistant Professor (Yoga Education).

The event was attended by Md. Taiyab Alam, Communication and Documentation Officer and Deputy Director (I/C), MDNIY; Dr. I. N. Acharya, Programme Officer (Yoga Therapy); faculty members, students, officers and staff of the Institute.

As part of the month-long observance, MDNIY will organise a series of awareness, educational and outreach activities, including a nutrition quiz, poster-making competition, nutrition awareness programme for school children, and a community outreach programme on maternal nutrition and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY). The observance will conclude with a Valedictory Programme on 8 October 2026, featuring a poster exhibition, recognition of participants and an awareness session on Ayurvedic nutrition and healthy dietary practices.



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