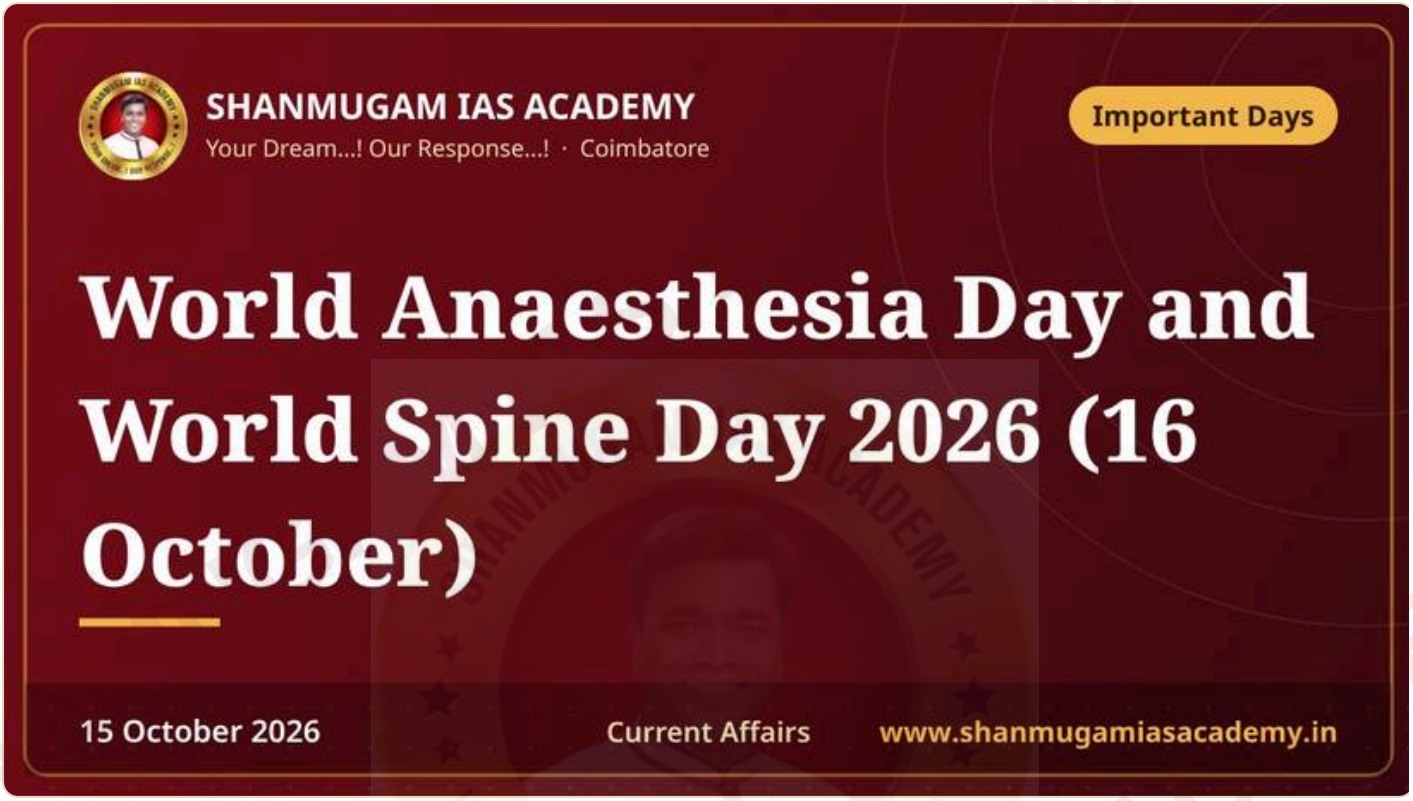
World Anaesthesia Day and World Spine Day 2026 (16 October)

Important Days · 15 October 2026 · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/10/15



News

16 October is World Anaesthesia Day ('Ether Day'), marking 16 Oct 1846, when dentist William T.G. Morton gave the first successful public demonstration of ether anaesthesia at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, USA. World Spine Day falls on the same day – its 2026 theme is 'Spine Health for Life', organised by the World Federation of Chiropractic. About 1 billion people worldwide have spinal pain.

Key facts

Anaesthesia Day	16 Oct 1846 – William T.G. Morton (dentist), ether; Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston ('Ether Dome'); surgeon John Collins Warren
WFSA	World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists – 9 Sept 1955, Scheveningen (Netherlands); 2026–28 theme 'Anaesthesiology Along the Patient Pathway'
Spine Day	2026 theme 'Spine Health for Life'; World Federation of Chiropractic; first official observance 2012
India	First ether anaesthesia in India – 22 Mar 1847, Medical College Hospital, Calcutta (Dr O'Shaughnessy); Indian Society of Anaesthetists (ISA) – 1947
Back pain	Leading cause of disability worldwide; 619 million low-back-pain cases in 2020, projected 843 million by 2050

Background

- History of anaesthesia: chloroform – James Young Simpson (1847, Edinburgh); nitrous oxide ('laughing gas') – discovered by Joseph Priestley (1772); Humphry Davy noted its pain-relieving effect; used by dentist Horace Wells. The word 'anaesthesia' was suggested by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Ancient Indian texts credit Sushruta with using wine and cannabis during surgery.
- Spine: the human vertebral column has 33 vertebrae (26 after fusion) – cervical 7, thoracic 12, lumbar 5, sacral 5 (fused), coccygeal 4 (fused). The spinal cord carries messages between the brain and the body.
- Types: general anaesthesia (complete unconsciousness), regional (spinal / epidural) and local anaesthesia.

Tamil Nadu link: CMC Vellore performed India's first successful kidney transplant (1971).

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