

Maa Skandamata –
Fifth manifestation of Devi Durga

The fifth manifestation of Devi Durga is known as Maa Skandamata. She is fifth among Nava Durgas, that's why she is worshipped on the fifth Navratri. Devi Maa is the mother of Kumara Skanda or Kumara Kartikeya also called Lord Murugan in south India. Kumar Skanda was chosen by Gods as their commander in 'Deva-Sura Sangram' (the war of gods and demons) against the demons. Lord Murugan's glory has been narrated in the Puranas and he is referred to as Kumara and Saktidhar. His vehicle being peacock he is also called Mayuravahana.

Thus being the mother of Skanda she is Skandamata. Worshipping Skandamata on the fifth day of Navaratra has very importance for Yogis & Sadhaks. This day devotee's mind reaches Visuddha Chakra and stays therein. In her image the Lord Skanda in his infant form is always found. She holds him in her lap.

Using a lion as a vehicle, Mother Goddess has four arms and three eyes. She holds Lord Skanda in her right upper arm and a lotus flower in her right lower hand, which is slightly raised upward. The left upper arm is in a pose to grant boon and in left lower hand, which is raised, she again holds lotus. She is of Golden colour. She is seated on lotus flower so she is called Padmasana.

The scriptures are very eloquent in glorifying the fifth day of Navaratra period. As the mind of the aspirant, on this day, is in the Visuddha Chakra, so all his actions internal as well as external completely stop and the mind bereft of all thought-waves, is calm like a wave less ocean. It would be advancing towards the state of pure consciousness. It is completely submerged in the meditation of Mother Padmasana, quite devoid of worldly thoughts or coats of Maya. It is time when the aspirant should be most careful and cautious on the path of his Sadhana.

By worshipping the Goddess in the form of Skandamata, the devotee gets all his desires fulfilled. He starts tasting the Supreme joy even in this very mortal world. The gateway for salvation to him is spontaneously opened. Her worship automatically includes the worship of Lord Skanda in his child form. Only she has got this pride of place. So the Sadhak should particularly be attentive to her worship. Being the presiding deity of Sun God, she bestows an uncommon luster and radiance on her devotee. He is always surrounded by an invisible divine halo, which always maintains his 'Yoga-Ksema'.

Therefore, we should try very sincerely to take refuge under her. There is no better way to Moksha from this world. She is the Goddess of Fire. The daughter of Himalaya, after observing penance got married with Shiva. She had a son named Skanda. Skanda is a leader of the army of Gods. Skanda Mata is a deity of fire. Skanda is seated in her lap. She has three eyes and four hands. She is white and seated on a lotus. Some also depict her sitting on a lion with her son Skand (Lord Kartikeya) in her lap with two hands holding lotuses while the other two hands respectively display defending and granting gestures.

It is said, by the mercy of Ma Skandmata, even the idiot becomes an ocean of knowledge. The great and legendary Sanskrit Scholar Kalidas created his two masterpiece works viz. Raghuvansh Maha Kavya and Meghdoot by the grace of Ma Skandmata. However some believe Kalidasa was also inspired and blessed by Maa Kushmanda.



NAVRATRA SPECIAL RECIPE
Aloo Peanut Cutlet



Ingredients
2 boiled potato
1 tablespoon water chestnut flour
1/2 teaspoon dry mango powder
black salt as required
1/2 cup crushed peanuts
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder
2 tablespoon ghee

Method:
Peel the boiled potatoes and collect them in a bowl. Mash them properly with a masher or fork. Add crushed peanuts, salt, red chilli powder, dry mango powder, cumin powder and water chestnut flour. Add 2 tbsp water and mix well with your hands to form a mixture. Grease your hands a bit with ghee. Take out small portions from the dough and flatten them out to make tikkis. Make tikkis using all mixture. Smear 1-2 tbsp ghee on a non-stick pan. Place the tikkis on the pan and let them cook from one side. Once golden brown, flip them towards the other side and let them cook properly. Serve the tikkis with some mint chutney. Enjoy!

Tips
You can stuff the tikkis with some pomegranate seeds for added taste.

— WORLD HEART DAY —
Lifestyle changes must to lower heart disease risk: Dr Sushil Sharma
Impressive Walkathon organised to mark World Heart Day



Glimpses of Walkathon organized by Department of Cardiology SSH Jammu headed by Dr Sushil Sharma in association with C-3 Society, Orlando USA to celebrate World Heart Day in Jammu on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Emphasizing the need of changing lifestyle to prevent heart-related problems, Dr Sushil Kumar Sharma, Head of the Department, Department of Cardiology, Government Medical College Hospital (GMCH) Jammu focused on the need for preventive measures like maintaining a healthy lifestyle, dietary preferences, physical activity to remain healthy.

To celebrate World Heart Day, a Walkathon organized by Department of cardiology headed by Dr Sushil and in association with C-3 Society, Orlando USA.

Speaking at the conclusion of the Walkathon, Dr Sushil said that nothing is more powerful than human resolve to prevent any disease.

He pointed out that Jammuites have reasserted their resolve by participating in today's Walkathon with an overwhelming response from every section of the society while maintaining the social distancing norms.

This Walkathon was organized regarding

World Heart Day, to make people aware of how to keep a healthy heart to avoid morbidity and mortality, particularly in times of pandemic when already we have suffered millions of deaths worldwide, he said.

Lok Sabha member from Jammu-Poonch constituency Jugal Kishore Sharma, Director AIIMS Jammu, Dr. Shakti Gupta, President Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCI) Arun Gupta, eminent agriculture scientist, and national secretary of BJP, Dr Narinder Singh, Ashwani Khajuria (Administrator GMCH Jammu), Dr Sanjogita Soodan (Dy Med Supt), Dr Rajinder Singh (former Principal GMCH), Capt. Murti, eminent cardiologist Dr. Mohan Lal, CVTS Surgeon Dr Arvind Kohli, former head of CVTS Department GMC Jammu, Dr. Gurjit Singh, Dr Nasir Ali Choudhary and prominent citizens of Jammu and soldiers of security forces attended the impressive Walkathon.

This year the theme of World Heart Day is, "Use Heart For Every Heart" and all the

participants were made aware to consider how best to use their hearts for humanity, nature, and for everyone. Beating the cardiovascular disease is something that matters to every beating heart.

"On World Heart Day with the help of Walkathon masses were educated that to use the Heart means to think differently. To make the right decisions. To act with courage. To help others. To engage with this important cause. The heart is the only organ that can hear and feel. It is the first and last sign of life. It is one of the few things with the potential to unite all of us as people", Dr. Sushil Sharma said.

For Every Heart involves the use of "FOR" and swings the focus from the actions themselves to the beneficiaries of the actions, allowing for wider application of the campaign while also making it more personal. "World Heart Day messages should reach as many individuals as possible to help achieve cardiovascular health for every heart", he emphasized.

"The aim of organizing this Walkathon is

to address the ever-rising trend of CVDs which take the lives of 18.6 million people every year; 31% of all global deaths. Triggering these diseases - which manifest primarily as heart attacks and strokes - are tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and the harmful use of alcohol", Dr. Sharma said.

Dr Sushil further said that collective factors like abnormal lipids, smoking, hypertension, diabetes, abdominal obesity, psycho-social variables, and alcohol consumption need early intervention so that they should not turn uglier enough to initiate the onset of chronic morbidities among the common populace.

"There is very low awareness about these diseases among people leading to further challenges to inculcating lifestyle changes and prevention methods", he said and added that today's event aimed to create awareness among society by involving all sections of the society. Speaking on the occasion, Jugal Kishore Sharma called for coordination among all sections of the soci-

ety to create awareness among people about such diseases. Appreciating the participation of a large number of people in the Walkathon, the Lok Sabha member observed that it is a good sign that a large number of people have participated in today's event. He said that every section of society must create awareness among people to prevent such diseases. He also emphasized the need for regular exercise to remain healthy. Lok Sabha member appreciated Dr Sushil Sharma for organizing health camps in remotest and far-flung to educate people and also to provide health facilities to the people at their doorsteps.

Dr. Shakti Gupta also appreciated the Walkathon and said that such events are most to create awareness among people. Walkathon started from Bikram Chowk and culminated at Superspecialty Hospital, Jammu. At the outset, Dr. Mohan Lal, Dr Gurjit Singh, Dr Arvind Kohli, and Dr Nasir Ali Choudhary informed the participants on how to stay healthy and how to prevent any complica-

tions in patients who already have cardiovascular disease. The walkathon concluded with the release of balloons bearing messages like Beat CVD, Quit Smoking, Healthy Diet, Physical Activity, Maintain adequate blood pressure, Control diabetes, cholesterol level, and de-stress.

Cyclists from different parts of Jammu, prominent citizens, and media persons attended the walkathon. The eminent scientist from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Jammu (SKUAST-J) conducted the proceedings of the concluding event at Super specialty Hospital. Scientists and students of SKUAST-Jammu also participated in the Walkathon. Carrying placards spreading the messages on the occasion of World Heart Day, students from different schools in Jammu were the attraction of the Walkathon. Students of Lawrence Public School, Maa Saraswati School, Adarsh Club, Wazir Jankinath Memorial School, Jammu Sanskriti School, and IDPS participated in the Walkathon.

