
















Culture Group and Language	Belief Practices	Nutritional Preferences	Communication Awareness	Patient Care/ Handling of Death
<b>AMERICAN</b> English 	Christian and Jewish beliefs are prominent; many others exist in smaller numbers. Family-oriented.	Beef, chicken, potatoes, vegetables. Fast food. Ethnic foods.	Talkative, shake hands, not much touching during conversation. Prefer to gather information for decision making. Some hugging and kissing, mainly between women.	Family members and friends visit in small groups. Expect high-quality care.
<b>ARGENTINIAN</b> Spanish 	90% Catholic, some Protestant and Jewish. Strong belief in saints, purgatory and heaven. People from rural areas may be more superstitious.	Emphasis on meat, especially beef with homemade pastas, pastries and local wines. Mate: national beverage that is stimulating and "addictive" like coffee.	Talkative, very expressive, direct and to the point. Extroverted. Good eye contact. Like personal and physical contact such as holding hands, hugging and kissing.	Educated, yet reluctant to get medical attention or accept new medical advancements. Independent, often deny disability. Believe in natural & holistic remedies: herbal teas, pure aloe, natural oils, poultices. Family gets involved with caring for the ill family member.
<b>BRAZILIAN</b> Portuguese Diverse cultural backgrounds including: European, African, Indian. 	Mostly Catholic; some Spiritism. Growing Evangelical representation. Candomble and Macumba - similar to Santeria.	Beans and rice are staple. Feijoada- black beans, beef, pork. Churrasco (charcoal-broiled meats). Manioc (vegetable). Tropical fruits.	Very sociable. Will stand close to each other. Social kissing, hugging, touching. Good eye contact.	Emphasis on family unity - will want to be actively involved. Tend to trust medical personnel, place great faith in doctors and nurses. Some believe in herb treatment, teas and balsams.
<b>CANADIAN</b> English; French and Inuit (Eskimo) 	Protestant, Catholic and Jewish.	Comparable to American diet. French influence in Montreal and Quebec.	May prefer no touching or kissing. Take things at face value.	Follow nurses' instructions. Accustomed to socialized medicine, less litigation. Take physicians at their word. Willing to wait for treatment.
<b>CAYMAN</b> English with some changes in accent and verbs. 	People are very religious. Majority of the island is Baptist or "Church of God." <u>Voodoo and psychics are outlawed.</u>	Fish, turtle, beef, goat and conch. Rice, beans and plantains. Fried food very rich in fat: cooked or fried in coconut oil or milk.	Like to be acknowledged. Good eye contact. Prefer no touching or kissing. Very talkative and known for their friendliness. Everyone on the island knows each other.	Like to be told what is going on by doctor. Would rather talk to doctors than nurses. Prefer one-to-one care.
<b>CHINESE</b> Many dialects spoken; one written language. 	Religions: Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity. Harmonious relationship with nature and others; loyalty to family, friends and government. Public debate of conflicting views is unacceptable. Accommodating, not confrontational. Modesty, self-control, self-reliance, self-restraint. Hierarchical structure for interpersonal and family interactions.	Diet consisting of vegetables and rice. Tofu (bean curd) can be prepared in various ways. Soy sauce, MSG and preserved foods. Belief in theory of 'yin'(cold) and 'yang'(hot) when they are sick. No food with 'yin' after surgery (e.g. cold desserts, salad). Often lactose intolerant.	Quiet, polite, unassertive. Suppress feelings of anxiety, fear, depression and pain. Eye contact and touching sometimes seen as offensive or impolite. Emphasize loyalty and tradition. Self-expression and individualism are discouraged.	Women uncomfortable with exams by male physicians. May not adhere to fixed schedule. May fear medical institutions. Use a combination of herbal and Western medicine. Traditional: acupuncture, herbal medicine, massage, skin scraping and cupping. Alcohol may cause flushing.
<b>CUBAN</b> Spanish 	Catholic with Protestant minority. Santeria, which can include animal sacrifice.	Cuban bread, cafe con leche, Cuban coffee. Roast pork, black beans and rice. Plantains, yuca, chicken and rice.	Some may have a tendency to be loud when having a discussion. Use their hands for emphasis and credibility, and prefer strong eye contact.	Culture requires visiting the sick. The extended family supports the immediate family. It is an insult to the patient if there is not a large family/friend presence.
<b>ECUADORIAN</b> Spanish Quechua-Indian 	Primarily Catholic. Increase in Protestant, Baptist and Jehovah Witness. Very respectful toward religious leaders. Small percentage of population is wealthy with much political control. Family size is usually large.	Diet high in fruits and proteins, starches: rice, potatoes, corn. Food is prepared fresh daily, usually with salsa. Coastal diet: rice, fish (ceviche). Drink beer, soda.	Extremely polite. Reserved. Respectful. Especially helpful.	Prefer pampering ill family members; stay overnight with patient. Not stoic when it comes to pain. Very private, modest. Embarrassed if they do not look their best. Extremely protective of family; often parents live with grown children.
<b>PHILIPINO</b> English; Spanish; Tagalog (80 Dialects) 	Catholic. Seek both faith healer and Western physician when ill. Belief that many diseases are the will of God.	Theory of hot and cold food. Certain foods in the Philippines are traditionally eaten hot or cold, e.g. milk is only taken HOT. Fish, rice, vegetables, fruit. Meals have to be HOT.	Value and respect elders. Loving, family-oriented. Set aside time just for family.	Family decision important. Ignore health-related issues; often noncompliant. In spite of Western medicine, they often leave things in hands of God, with occasional folk medicine. Home remedies: herbal tea, massage, sleep. May subscribe to supernatural cause of diseases.
<b>GUATEMALAN</b> Spanish; Mayan heritage; European influence 	Primarily Catholic. Increase in Protestants. Very respectful toward elders. European heritage; strong family ties.	Diet high in fruits, vegetables, rice, beans and tortillas (corn flour bread).	Quiet, reserved and respectful. Will not question for fear of insulting professional.	Modest, private and stoic. Believe in alternative methods of healing.
<b>HAITIAN</b> Creole; French is taught in schools. 	Catholic and Protestant. Voodoo is practiced. Large social gap exists between wealthy and poor citizens.	Large breakfast and lunch. Light dinner. Rice, fried pork trillot and red beans. Herbs and cloves.	Quiet, polite. Value touch and eye contact.	Obedient to doctor and nurse but hesitant to ask questions. View use of oxygen as indication of severe illness. Occasionally share pre-scriptions and home remedies.

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<b>HINDU</b> Hindi 	The belief of cyclic birth and reincarnation lies at the center of Hinduism. The status, condition and caste of each life is determined by behavior in the last life.	Cow is sacred. No beef. Some are strictly vegetarian.	Limit eye contact. Do not touch while talking.	Do not try to force foods when religiously forbidden. Death- the priest may tie a thread around the neck or wrist to signify a blessing. This thread should not be removed. The priest will pour water into the mouth of the body. Family will request to wash the body. Eldest son is responsible for the funeral rites.
<b>JAMAICAN</b> English; Patois broken English 	Christian beliefs dominate (Catholic, Baptist, Anglican). Strong Rastafari influence.	Beef, goat, rice and peas, chicken, vegetables, fish, lots of spices. Some avoid eating pork and pork products because of religious beliefs.	Respect for elders is encouraged. Reserved; avoid hugging and showing affection in public. Curious and tend to ask a lot of questions.	Will try some home remedies before seeking medical help. Like to be completely informed before procedures. Respectful of doctor's opinion. May be reluctant to admit that they are in pain. May not adhere to a fixed schedule.
<b>JAPANESE</b> Japanese 	Self-praise or the acceptance of praise is considered poor manners. Family is extremely important. Behavior and communication are defined by role and status. Religion includes a combination of Buddhism and Shinto	Food presentation is important. Fish and soybean are main sources of protein, as well as meats and vegetables (some pickled). Rice and noodles; tea; soy sauce. Often lactose intolerant.	Use attitude, actions and feelings to communicate. Talkative people are considered show-offs or insincere. Openness considered sign of immaturity, lack of self-control. Implicit non-verbal messages are of central importance. Use concept of hierarchy and status. Avoid conflict. Avoid eye contact and touch.	Family role for support is important. Insulted when addressed by first name. Confidentiality is very important for honor. Information about illness kept in immediate family. Prone to Keloid formation. Cleft lip or palate not uncommon. Alcohol may cause flushing. Tendency to control anger. May be reluctant to admit they are in pain.
<b>JEWISH</b> Many from E. European countries. English; Hebrew; Yiddish. Three basic groups: Orthodox (most strict), Conservative, Reform (least strict).	Israel is the holy land. Sabbath is from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. It is customary to invite other families in for Friday evening Sabbath dinner.	Orthodox and some conservatives maintain a Kosher diet. Kosher food is prepared according to Jewish law under Rabbinical supervision. Eating of unclean animals is forbidden. Blood and animal fats are taboo (blood is synonymous with life). Do not mix meat with dairy products.	Orthodox men do not touch women, except their wives. Touch only for hands-on care. Very talkative and known for their friendliness.	Stoic and authoritative; respect health care workers who show self-confidence. Appreciate family accommodation. Jewish law demands that they seek complete medical care. Donor transplants are not acceptable to Orthodox Jews, but are to Conservative & Reform. Death: Cremation is discouraged. Autopsy is permitted in less strict groups. Orthodox believe that entire body, tissues, organs, amputated limbs and blood sponges need to be available to family for burial. Do not cross hands in post-mortem care.
<b>KOREAN</b> Hangul	Family-oriented. Believe in reincarnation. Religions include: Shamanism, Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity. Belief in balance of two forces: hot and cold.	High fiber; spicy seasoning; rice; Kim Chee (fermented cabbage). Often lactose and alcohol intolerant. Speak little during meal.	Reserved with strangers. Will use eye contact with familiar individuals. Etiquette is important. First names used only for family members. Proud, independent. Children should not be used as translators due to reversal of parent/child relationship.	Family needs to be included in plan of care. Prefer non-contact. Respond to sincerity.
<b>MEXICAN</b> Spanish; people of Indian heritage may speak one of more than 50 dialects. 	Predominantly Roman Catholic. Pray, say rosary, have priest in time of crisis. Limited belief in "brujeria" as a magical, supernatural or emotional illness precipitated by evil forces.	Corn, beans, avocado, chiles, yellow rice. Heavy use of spices.	Tend to describe emotions by using dramatic body language. Very dramatic with grief but otherwise diplomatic and tactful. Direct confrontation is rude.	May believe that outcome of circumstances is controlled by external force; this can influence patient's compliance with health care. Women do not expose their bodies to men or other women.
<b>MUSLIM</b> Language of the country and some English.	Believe in one God "Allah" and Mohammed, his prophet. Five daily prayers. Zakat, a compulsory giving of alms to the poor. Fasting during the month of Ramadan. Pilgrimage to Mecca is the goal of the faithful.	No pork or alcohol. Eat only Halal meat (type of Kosher).	Limit eye contact. Do not touch while talking. Women cover entire body except face and hands.	Do not force foods when it is religiously forbidden. Abortion before 130 days- fetus treated as discarded tissue; after 130 days, as a human being. Before death, confession of sins with family present. After death, only relatives or priest may touch the body. Koran, the holy book, is recited near the dying person. The body is bathed and clothed in white and buried within 24 hours.
<b>NORTHERN EUROPEAN</b> Language of the country and some English.	Very similar to American customs. Protestant with large Catholic population. Multi-ethnic groups.	Comparable to American diet- meat, vegetables and starches. Coffee, hot tea and beer.	Courtesy is of utmost importance. Address by surname and maintain personal space and good eye contact.	Maintain modesty at all times. Stoic regarding pain tolerance. Death is taken quietly with little emotional expression. Patients/family tend not to question medical authority.
<b>SOUTHERN EUROPEAN</b> Language of the country and some English.	Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek Orthodox and some Jewish.	Main meal at midday: pasta, meat and fish with cheeses and wine. Fresh fruit. Espresso coffee.	Talkative, very expressive. Direct and to the point. Extroverted. Good eye contact. Like personal and physical contact: holding hands, patting on the back, kissing.	Educated, yet reluctant to get medical attention. Very independent. Birth control and abortion are accepted in some countries and not in others. Family gets involved with caring for ill family member.
<b>VIETNAMESE</b> Vietnamese language has several dialects- also French, English, Chinese. 	Family loyalty is very important. Religions include Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Cao Di, Hoa Hoa, Catholicism, occasional ancestral worship. General respect and harmony. Supernatural is sometimes used as an explanation for disease.	Rice often with green leafy vegetable, fish sauce added for flavor. Meat used sparingly and cut into small pieces. Tea is main beverage. Often lactose and alcohol intolerance.	Communication-formal, polite manner; limit use of touch. Respect conveyed by nonverbal communication. Use both hands to give something to an adult. To beckon someone, place palm downward and wave. Don't snap your fingers to gain attention. Person's name used with title, i.e. "Mr. Bill," "Director James." "Ya" indicates respect (not agreement).	Negative emotions conveyed by silence and reluctant smile; will smile even if angry. Head is sacred-avoid touching. Back rub- uneasy experience. Common folk practices- skin rubbing, pinching, herbs in hot water, balms, string tying. Misunderstanding about illness- drawing blood seen as loss of body tissue; organ donation causes suffering in next life. Hospitalization is last resort. Flowers only for the dead.