

CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

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**WELCOME
ENLOE MEDICAL CENTER
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Hispanic Cultural Beliefs

- Religious beliefs play a substantial role in how Mexican Americans view their health
- Studies indicate that many Mexican Americans believe their health problems may be a result of God's will
- Many believe they do not have control over their own fate

Traditional Folk Healing

- Mexican Americans have believed in spiritual healing for centuries
- Mexicans may decline conventional care due to their beliefs in a healer or *Curandero*
- Mexicans believe health is a gift from God and illness is a punishment
 - Believe one must view illness as inevitable



Curandero

- Holistic healer
- Social, physical, psychological purposes
- Includes elements of Catholic and Pentecostal rituals
- Uses different herbs to heal



Common Hispanic Ailments (traditionally)

- *Susto* – excessive emotion such as anger or shame
 - Results in general malaise or depression
- *Espanto* – frightened by a ghost where soul is believed to leave the body
 - *Curandero* is involved to treat this
- *Envidia* – emotion of envy among one's friends and neighbors



Common Hispanic Ailments (traditionally) cont.

- *Caida de la mollera* – fallen fontanel
 - the infants palate drops, preventing feeding
- *Mal de ojo* – when a person casts a strong, admiring look on another person
 - Has flu like symptoms; fever and headache
- *Empacho* – hot-cold imbalance in the stomach
 - Nausea, gas, weakness



Western Medicine and Hispanic's

- Western doctor's need to take the entire family into consideration when making medical decisions
- Trust and confidence of the patient are gained by seeking opinions of the family members



Difficulty in Health Care

- Insufficient or lacking translators
- Hispanics may delay seeing health care professionals for a long time due to religious beliefs and use of healers
 - ▣ Home remedies are usually used first for healing before outside help is sought
- Income may restrict doctor's visits
 - ▣ 37% of Mexican Americans do not have health insurance

Counseling Strategies

- Latinos communicate in a warm, non-confrontational way
 - ▣ Touching the hand of a client for a hand shake may be appropriate
 - ▣ Avoid eye contact for long periods of time – considered rude
- Latinos may prefer walk-in clinics over appointments due to their multi-tasking nature
- Prefer a direct, action-oriented approach



Traditional Food Habits

- Mexicans are very proud of their culinary heritage
- A unique blend of native and European foods
 - prepared with Indian and Spanish cooking techniques
- Cuisine is both spicy and sophisticated



Staple Ingredients

- What do you think are some of the staple ingredients in the Hispanic Culture?



Staple Ingredients

- Chiles
- Tortillas
- Beans
- Cocoa
- Corn
- Tomatoes
- Rice



Common Foods

- Aztec Contribution

- Hot tortillas, roast turkey, chilies, squash seeds, cocoa etc.

- Spanish Contribution

- Cinnamon, garlic, onions, rice, sugar cane, wheat, and hogs



Staples in the Diet

- The cuisine of Mexico is very diverse due to many inaccessible regions retaining their native diet
- Diets differ based on availability of local fruits, vegetables, or meats
- Majority of poor Mexicans have little variety in their diet
 - Mostly corns, beans, and squash, tortillas,
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5CWchPCHlk>

Adaption to American Food

- A study has shown that Mexican immigrants living in the southwestern United States are more likely to eat a diet with a high intake in sugar cereals, red meat, white bread, and caffeine containing beverages
- Mexican immigrants have accepted the stereotypical American eating patterns.



Meal Consumption

- Studies show that low income Latinos prefer traditional foods at mealtime.
- The American meal pattern has been adopted by Chicanos (small breakfast, small lunch, large dinner)
 - Cereals for breakfast and sandwiches for lunch becoming more popular



Nutritional Status

- Nutritional Problems have been identified in immigrants from Mexico, new and old
 - Mexican Americans consume more fat, more cheese, and fewer fruits and vegetables than non Hispanics
 - Butter, mayo, sweetened juice drinks are staples in the diet now
- Poverty adversely affects the diet of 30-40% of total Latino population

Nutritional Status

- Deficiencies include
 - Iron deficiency
 - Not enough protein in the diet, although not well documented
 - Calcium and Riboflavin
 - Not enough of these nutrients in typical American diet
 - Traditional Mexican diet provides enough of these
- Low amounts of traditional foods leads to low amounts of niacin, folate, phosphorous, zinc, and fiber
 - Traditional Mexican diet usually has good amounts

Nutrition Conditions

- Diabetes (type II)
 - 2-5 times higher in people of Mexican descent
 - Considered number one health problem of Chicanos
- Gallbladder Disease
 - Associated with overweight and obesity
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnfZvxXITlc&feature=related>

Obesity Concerns

- Obesity
 - 2-4 times more likely to be overweight
 - 42% of Mexican American women are obese and 31% of Mexican American men are obese
 - 55% Mexican American women overweight
 - 43% Mexican American men overweight
 - However, it is believed among Mexican Americans that extra weight indicates health and well-being and obesity is sometimes perceived as a status symbol.

Typical Meal vs. Healthy Option

- <http://mexicanfood.about.com/od/gotpork/r/carnitas.htm>
- <http://www.everydayhealth.com/health-recipe/barbecued-chicken-burritos.aspx>

A Quick Review

- What is a *Curandero*?
- What are some reasons Hispanics will have difficulty in the Health Care System?
- What are some common deficiencies with Hispanics?
- What are the main nutritional conditions that are of concern for the Hispanic Community?

References

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