



A Dictionary of Patients' Spiritual & Cultural Values for Health Care Professionals

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A Note

1. This Dictionary is a guide that is meant to describe beliefs and practices generally found within a particular cultural or religious group. As often as possible, we have verified the content with people who self-identify with that particular group. That process is ongoing. We have consulted printed and online sources considered the most authoritative in this content area. However, we understand as should the reader that not everyone who identifies with a particular cultural or religious group will adhere to the beliefs or values as presented.
2. The Dictionary is not complete- and it may not ever be. Thus, the reader will see that much information is still missing because we have not found sources on a given topic that we consider authoritative. We plan to post new versions of the Dictionary as we accumulate new information. As this Dictionary is a work in progress, we welcome feedback and contributions via email to Rev. George Handzo, BCC at gandzo@healthcarechaplains.org.
3. These materials are authorized for use per the license agreement below:
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Introduction

Why do we need to be culturally and spiritually sensitive? The Joint Commission (JC) holds hospitals accountable for addressing and maintaining patient rights. These rights include the accommodation of cultural, religious, spiritual, and personal values as well as to religious and other spiritual practices.

Health care professionals are entrusted to care for patients as whole persons - body, mind and spirit. The health care approach is interdisciplinary and encompassing. It is important, then, for that approach to be culturally and spiritually sensitive. In addition, health care professionals need to be empowered with the capacity, skills, and knowledge to respond to the unique needs of each patient and their loved ones.

The Joint Commission is developing proposed accreditation requirements for hospitals to advance effective communication, cultural competence, and patient-centered care. Implementation is expected to begin January 2011.

Questions about these materials or suggestions for improvement should be directed to:

The Rev. George Handzo, BCC
Vice President, Pastoral Care Leadership & Practice
HealthCare Chaplaincy
ghandzo@healthcarechaplancy.org

Religions

Western Religions

Comparison of Jewish, Christian and Muslim Traditions

*The three traditions are historically linked, yet with key differences in belief.

All believe in:

- One God. He is almighty, just and merciful
- Heaven and hell after death
- God's call to Abraham in the land of Ur
- Similar codes of ethics
- Hebrew Scriptures (Christian Old Testament)

*Primary belief differences concern Jesus Christ.

Christians believe:

- Jesus Christ is the messiah (savior) of humanity
- Jesus Christ is the holy son of God
- In the Christian Scripture (New Testament) as a continuation of the Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)

Jews believe:

- Jesus Christ is not the messiah
- In the Hebrew Scripture (Christian Old Testament)

Muslims believe:

- Jesus was a prophet
- Called Jesus by the name, 'Isa, and God, Allah
- 'Isa did receive words from Allah, but the Bible has corrupted those words. Now the Qur'an is the only reliable book of Allah's words and 'Isa's teachings.
- 'Isa didn't die, he ascended to Allah

Judaism

All believe in:

- One all-powerful God who created the universe
- God communicated the commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, they are written in the Torah
- Commitments, obligations, duties, and commandments to religion have priority over rights and individual pleasures
- Sanctity of life overrides nearly all religious obligations. Therefore, the sick are exempt from normal fasting requirements.

Major Jewish Movements:

- Orthodox
- Conservative
- Reform

Note- In describing a person's religious affiliation, be aware that there are Orthodox Jews and (Eastern) Orthodox Christians both often referred to as 'Orthodox'. Likewise, someone who labels themselves as 'Reform' is Jewish. Someone who labels themselves as 'Reformed' is Christian.

Orthodox Jews believe in:

- Strict and traditional interpretation of the Torah
- Strict and traditional interpretation of laws and commandments
- The Torah is divine and unalterable
- Following of the code of Jewish Law

Conservative Jews believe in:

- Acceptance of traditional and modern religious observances
- Conservation of Jewish tradition, but also changing to fit modern times

Reform Jews believe in:

- Freedom to interpret the Torah and choose religious observances

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Majority of Jews unaffiliated- Judaism can be seen as identity and not faith system <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodoxy is the most fundamental of the movements- adhering to Written and Oral Laws <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative sees revelation as Divinely inspired and contains a large tent between Orthodoxy and Reform <input type="checkbox"/> Reform sees revelation as interpreted by the individual in a dialogue between Jewish history and contemporary wisdom. <input type="checkbox"/> Other smaller movements generally fall on the more liberal side
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodox- May pray three times daily- ideally in community. Less open to non-liturgical prayer life. <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative- Daily prayers valued. Individual approaches can vary. <input type="checkbox"/> Reform- prayers are valued- can be more open to multi-faith and prayers at bedside.
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in life after death accepted by Orthodox and Conservative; Reform acknowledges as part of tradition but allows for individuals to form their own belief system <input type="checkbox"/> Persons experiencing grave suffering and/or approaching death are usually encouraged to connect with community (all denominations) and pray appropriately to denominational beliefs. <input type="checkbox"/> Prayers for sick can be an important part of faith in illness for those who celebrate their Judaism in a religious fashion. The most common prayer used in this context is called the micheberach <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy and Organ Donation acceptable to the Conservative and Reform movements and smaller segments of Orthodoxy. <u>Always</u> have families in touch with their rabbi. <input type="checkbox"/> Body to be treated with respect. Family may want to stay with the body until it is removed by the funeral director. <input type="checkbox"/> Burial recommended as soon as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation either prohibited or discouraged. <input type="checkbox"/> Graveside and funeral home services are typical.
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask patient and family about preferred practices <input type="checkbox"/> Provide for privacy as needed
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodox and many Conservative will need kosher-certified food.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blood and blood products acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> May wish major amputated limb to be buried in consecrated ground <input type="checkbox"/> Consult Rabbi with issues of tube feeding and life support

<p>Holy days and festivals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rosh Hashanah- Jewish New Year (Solemn) <input type="checkbox"/> Yom Kippur- Fast (no eating or drinking); Day of Atonement <input type="checkbox"/> Sukkot- Weeklong festival of Tabernacles <input type="checkbox"/> Shemini Atzeret/ Simachat Torah- Festive days concluding the High Holidays <input type="checkbox"/> Channukah- eight day festival of lights <input type="checkbox"/> Purim- Preceded by Fast of Esther (no eating or drinking) holiday of the Book of Esther <input type="checkbox"/> Pesach/Passover- Week long Holiday of Freedom <input type="checkbox"/> Shavuot/Pentecost- Holiday of revelation <input type="checkbox"/> Asara B'tevet, Tzom Gedalia, Shiva Asar B'Tamuz and Tisha B'Av- fast days (no eating or drinking) of mourning <input type="checkbox"/> NOTE- be in touch with rabbi to facilitate religious celebration in a healing environment- especially around fasting <input type="checkbox"/> Sabbath and Holy Days can be days where electricity is not used(Orthodox)- consult with Rabbinic authority
<p>Pregnancy and birth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodox-Consult Rabbinic authority about birth control Other denominations are more liberal <input type="checkbox"/> All denominations allow abortion to save the mother- consult Rabbinic and other authorities
<p>Rituals or ceremonies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Synagogue/Temple attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting candles before Sabbath and Holidays <input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of cultural differences in observance and practice, especially in the large and growing number of Spanish speaking communities.
<p>Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Sabbath Candles can be meaningful

Christianity

All believe in:

- One God who is almighty, just, and merciful
 - Jesus Christ is the messiah and son of God
 - Jesus' death and resurrection
 - Faith in Jesus can save one from sin and eternal death
 - Following of the Bible, which includes the Old Testament and the New Testament
 - Following of Christ's teachings in daily life. (In ways such as following the 10 Commandments, the New Covenant, the Bible)
-

Christian Science

* Also known as Church of Christ, Scientist

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Includes study of Metaphysics, which suggests the presence of spiritual powers that operate on the mind and body<input type="checkbox"/> Faith does not rest on blind belief; rather, understanding perfection of God's spiritual creation in the present<input type="checkbox"/> All religions have value
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Prayer and sacraments
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia contrary to teachings<input type="checkbox"/> Most do not donate body or organs<input type="checkbox"/> Disposal of body and burial is a family decision
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Always clarify if and what medical and/or psychological techniques, procedures, or medications patient and family wish to use
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Believed to be the result of disharmony between mind and matter<input type="checkbox"/> Belief that healing occurs when one draws closer to God and experiences moral and spiritual change<input type="checkbox"/> Not completely opposed to medical treatment but may be fearful of being forced to accept unwanted treatments which violate individual personal

	beliefs
Holy days and festivals	<input type="checkbox"/> None
Pregnancy and birth	<input type="checkbox"/> Abortion incompatible with faith <input type="checkbox"/> Birth control is an individual decision <input type="checkbox"/> May desire midwife
Rituals or ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> No outward ceremonies or observances
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary text is Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures <input type="checkbox"/> No set apart leadership, but full-time healing ministers (practitioners) practice spiritual healing, which is uniquely different from medical or psychological techniques



Eastern Orthodox

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The community recites the Nicene Creed at every Divine Liturgy, which summarizes the beliefs of the Church. The Orthodox view the Trinity as ,three persons, one in essence and undivided.' Christ is understood to be the Son of God, both fully divine and fully human, and the Holy Spirit enables humanity to apprehend God's presence in the world. ☐ In the Bible, God has revealed Himself as living and present in his people. It is considered the ,Word of God,' though not considered inerrant or literal. ☐ Veneration of Mary referred to as the Theotokos (,God-bearer') in that she carried the New Covenant in the person of Christ. ☐ A person's communion with God is expressed in love. Where there is no love, God is absent and there is no spiritual life. All are already saved (Christ's death and resurrection), are still being saved (through participation in the church), and will be saved in the future (second coming of Christ).
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Divine Liturgy attendance on Sundays and/or holy days; some communities hold Matins and Vespers services daily. ☐ Prayers at home with icons and/or incense
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Holy Unction (anointing with oil) is administered to the sick by Orthodox clergy. It is administered to all Orthodox on the Wednesday of Holy Week. ☐ The church offers special prayer for the dead on the third, ninth, fortieth day and one year anniversary of the death. The traditional saying after a person has passed away is ,Memory Eternal.' ☐ Belief that the departed soul can be affected by intercessory prayers; redemption and reconciliation with God is possible after death.
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Orthodox Christians pray in the presence of icons, making the sign of the cross. Icons are not worshipped but instead are venerated and honored as 'windows' into divine reality and as an aid to prayer.
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Many Orthodox fast from meat, dairy and oil on Wednesdays and Fridays. During Great Lent and Christmas Lent (Advent), a 40-day period of fasting from meat, dairy and oil is observed. The fast is broken with a joyous community feast after the Divine Liturgy. Fasting is flexible for those with health concerns or those who are pregnant.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ God is understood to be the ,Divine Physician and the ,healer of our souls and bodies,' which is facilitated through prayer and participation in the life of the Church. Traditional medical interventions are generally accepted.

Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Church observes a structured liturgical cycle of twelve feast days; Pascha (Easter is considered the 'feast of feasts'). <input type="checkbox"/> Every Sunday is dedicated to celebrating the Resurrection and the Triune God. <input type="checkbox"/> Various saints' days are celebrated throughout the year.
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Babies are baptized by immersion as early as 2 months of age; after baptism, they receive Holy Communion and are full members of the body of the Church.
Rituals or ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodox worship is structured and liturgical, with the use of chanted hymnody, incense and iconography. Participants stand during most of the liturgy. The focus of the liturgy is the blessing and receiving of Holy Communion.
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Three-Bar Orthodox Cross <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer with icons <input type="checkbox"/> 300 million members worldwide <input type="checkbox"/> Composed of numerous self-governing ecclesiastical bodies, each geographically and nationally distinct but theologically and sacramentally unified. Each self-governing (autocephalous) body is shepherded by a Synod of bishops



Jehovah's Witness

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No Holy Trinity. God is the Father, while Jesus Christ is His son, a separate person. The Holy Spirit is God's motivating force. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not participate in nationalistic ceremonies (e.g. saluting the flag), and do not give gifts at holidays or celebrate traditional Christian days. <input type="checkbox"/> Believe that after world is restored to state of paradise; beneficiaries of Christ will be resurrected with healthy, perfected physical bodies, and will inhabit earth.
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer and reading of Scriptures
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Death is a state of total unconsciousness <input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia forbidden <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy acceptable if legally required <input type="checkbox"/> Donation of body or organs is a personal choice
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be sensitive to strong religious beliefs opposing use of blood or blood products <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage patient or family to consult with congregational elders or to contact the local Hospital Liaison Committee for assistance.
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid food that contains blood
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Likely to be strongly opposed to blood transfusion <input type="checkbox"/> Medications from blood products may not be acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Use of extraordinary means to prolong life or right to die is individual choice
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings are held 3 times a week in local Kingdom Halls with focus on education <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly meetings in homes <input type="checkbox"/> Most important meeting of the year is a congregational celebration of the memorial of Christ's sacrificial death
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Abortion and artificial insemination by a donor are forbidden <input type="checkbox"/> Birth control is an individual choice <input type="checkbox"/> No infant baptism
Rituals or ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adult baptism <input type="checkbox"/> No special rituals for sick or dying
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> None

Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Centered and focused on Jesus Christ as the Firstborn of God <input type="checkbox"/> Members are literal spiritual sons and daughters of a living Father in Heaven <input type="checkbox"/> Mortality is a probationary period in which people are tested to see if they will obey the Lord's commandments given through ancient and current prophets <input type="checkbox"/> Building of temples where sacred and personal covenants can be entered into with the Lord
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer and reading scripture
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Belief that all individuals will be resurrected, and will attain degree of glory in heaven for those qualified from acts during their mortality <input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia not practiced <input type="checkbox"/> Promote peaceful and dignified death if inevitable <input type="checkbox"/> Organ donation an individual choice <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy permitted
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for visits by church representatives; privacy for prayer or ritual
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee, tea, tobacco and alcohol are prohibited <input type="checkbox"/> Fasting (no food or drink for 24 hours) required once each month - ill people not required to fast
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Faith healing (faith in Jesus Christ and power of priesthood to heal) and medical care/treatment used together <input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions on blood, blood products or medications
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follow basic Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter, as well as national holidays and church specific holidays
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Belief that one of central purposes of life is procreation <input type="checkbox"/> Birth control contrary to beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Abortion forbidden except when mother's life in danger or rape <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial insemination acceptable between husband and wife
Rituals or ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Naming and blessing of children <input type="checkbox"/> Two elders required for ritual of blessing of the sick <input type="checkbox"/> 'Family Home Evenings' held once a week are important
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> King James version of Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mormon and other scriptures <input type="checkbox"/> No formal clergy but designated leaders for specific roles, including Bishops and Elders <input type="checkbox"/> None

Protestant

* Numerous Christian groups in the U.S.

* Mainline denominations include: Baptist, Christian (also Disciples of Christ, Churches of Christ), Episcopalian (also Anglican), Lutheran, Mennonites (also Amish), United Methodist, Presbyterian, Reformed, and United Church of Christ.

Beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis on Scripture/Holy Bible as word of faith and life. Groups vary widely in how literally they adhere to Scripture. <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally two Sacraments of Baptism and Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Community worship important
Daily practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer, Scripture reading
Dying and death	<input type="checkbox"/> Organ donation, autopsy and burial or cremation usually individual decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia beliefs vary from individual decision to religious restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Body to be treated with respect
Facilitating practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask patient and family what practices they support <input type="checkbox"/> Provide privacy as needed
Food	<input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions
Health	<input type="checkbox"/> In most denominations, decisions about blood, blood products, vaccines, biopsies, amputations and transplants are individual choice <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer, anointing, Eucharist or other rituals may be important
Holy days and festivals	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Christian holidays and observances
Pregnancy and birth	<input type="checkbox"/> In most denominations, decisions about genetic counseling, birth control, fertility tests, and artificial insemination are individual choice <input type="checkbox"/> Some denominations may have restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Baptism of infants practiced in some denominations; others may desire blessing or dedication ritual
Rituals or ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayers for healing and comfort of the sick, commendation of the dying, personal prayer, Sacraments
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible <input type="checkbox"/> Cross <input type="checkbox"/> Many mainline denominations ordain both men and women while some conservative denominations may have only male leadership

Roman Catholicism

* Roman Catholicism is the largest group in the US

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strong tradition of liturgy (ceremony) <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis on practices (usually termed, sacraments), including: baptism, Eucharist, prayers for the sick, holy orders, marriage, confirmation and confession/penance <input type="checkbox"/> Dedication to creeds (formulated statements of beliefs) <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in Apostolic succession in leadership, meaning leaders should be male successors of the original apostles of Jesus
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prayers at table, bedside and other times <input type="checkbox"/> May desire daily Eucharist or attendance at Mass <input type="checkbox"/> Use of sacramentals or aids in the spiritual life, such as rosary beads/prayer, holy images, candles, etc.
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in life after death <input type="checkbox"/> Persons experiencing grave suffering and/or approaching death are usually encouraged to pin their suffering to that of Christ's. <input type="checkbox"/> Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick very important for the seriously ill, frail and elderly. Used to be called Last Rites. <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy and Organ Donation acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Body to be treated with respect <input type="checkbox"/> Wakes encouraged- usually in a funeral home the day before the funeral. <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Mass is the norm but can be replaced with a funeral version of Liturgy of the Word. <input type="checkbox"/> Graveside service is also typical
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask patient and family about preferred practices <input type="checkbox"/> Ask about rituals and needs such as Eucharist/Communion or anointing <input type="checkbox"/> Provide for privacy as needed
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Catholics may fast and/or ask for sacramental confession prior to receiving Eucharist and may wish to avoid meat on Fridays, especially during season of Lent; offer to provide fish instead <input type="checkbox"/> No general dietary restrictions.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blood and blood products acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> May wish major amputated limb to be buried in consecrated ground <input type="checkbox"/> Sacrament of the Sick (anointing by a priest) may be very important <input type="checkbox"/> May believe suffering is 'part of one's fate' or punishment from God
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Christian holidays as well as observance of special holy days when attendance at Mass is viewed as an obligation. <input type="checkbox"/> Holidays such as Christmas and Easter are celebrated as a season, not only

	for one significant day.
Pregnancy and birth	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural means of birth control only <input type="checkbox"/> Abortion and sterilization prohibited <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial means of conception are discouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Baptism of infants may be required and urgent if prognosis is grave
Rituals or ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Attending mass on Sunday and Holy Days, sometimes daily <input type="checkbox"/> Observing sacraments <input type="checkbox"/> Praying the rosary (beads to aid in saying prayers) <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting candles <input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of cultural differences in observance and practice, especially in the large and growing number of Spanish speaking communities.
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Rosary (prayer beads) <input type="checkbox"/> Holy water <input type="checkbox"/> Incense <input type="checkbox"/> Saints, especially Mary the mother of Jesus and saints associated with healing. <input type="checkbox"/> Jesus pictures and statues; crucifix (cross with corpus of Jesus) <input type="checkbox"/> Name of Jesus is important <input type="checkbox"/> Only (male) priest can offer Sacraments <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership includes priest (,Father'), deacon (,Mr' or ,Deacon'), nuns (,Sister') and brothers (,Brother'), whom all have taken vows, as well as Eucharistic ministers (lay- men and women who bring Eucharist/communion); chaplains, both men and women, who are specially trained and certified.

*Eastern Rite Catholics (different from Eastern Orthodox Christians) have similar but not identical beliefs and practices.

Seventh-day Adventist

* Also known as Adventist, Church of God, Advent Christian Church

Beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible is interpreted literally <input type="checkbox"/> Believe it is a duty to warn others to prepare for second coming of Christ <input type="checkbox"/> Body considered temple of God and must be kept healthy <input type="checkbox"/> Operate one of world's largest religious health care systems
Daily practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
Dying and death	<input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia not practiced <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy, donation of body or organs acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Disposal of body and burial are individual decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe in a continuation of life after death, until the return of Christ
Facilitating practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask patient and family about beliefs and preferences <input type="checkbox"/> Provide privacy
Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian diet encouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol, tea and coffee prohibited <input type="checkbox"/> May practice fasting
Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Believe healing can be accomplished both through medical intervention and divine healing <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplains and physicians are inseparable <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize physical medicine, rehabilitation and therapeutic diets <input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions on medications, blood or blood products or vaccines <input type="checkbox"/> May not condone use of narcotics or stimulants <input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions on surgical procedures although some may refuse interventions on Friday evening and Saturday Sabbath
Holy days and festivals	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday is the Sabbath, a day of worship and rest
Pregnancy and birth	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth control is an individual choice <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic abortion acceptable in cases of danger to mother, rape or incest <input type="checkbox"/> Opposed to infant baptism
Rituals or ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Pastors and elders may pray and anoint ill person with oil
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Pastors and elders are male

Islam (Muslim)

<p>The Five Basic Principles of Al-Islam/ Beliefs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shahadatain (Declaration of Faith)- To declare there is only one God, Allah, and that Muhammad is his messenger. <input type="checkbox"/> Salat (Prayer/ Worship)- Muslims must pray five times a day. The Qur'an is the final revelation to Humanity. <input type="checkbox"/> Zakat (Charitable Contributions)- Requires that once a year a Muslim is to give at the rate of 2.5% to a charitable cause. <input type="checkbox"/> Sawm (Fasting) - Participate in the month long fast of Ramadan, in which they restrain from food, drink, and sex during daylight hours. <input type="checkbox"/> Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca)- If in good health and with enough money, one must make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lifetime.
<p>Beliefs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One God, or Allah, is most important principle <input type="checkbox"/> Complete submission to God <input type="checkbox"/> Prophet Muhammad and Holy Qur'an <input type="checkbox"/> A judgment day and life after death <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment to fast during the holy month of Ramadan: abstaining from food, drink, sexual intercourse and evil intentions and actions <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment to attempt a pilgrimage to Mecca (in Saudi Arabia) at least once in life <input type="checkbox"/> Duty to give generously to poor people <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in Oneness of God <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in His Angels <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in His Books (All the revealed Scriptures) <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in His Messengers (All of them) <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in Hereafter (Life after Death) <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in the Day of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> Belief in Reward and Punishment
<p>Daily practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May engage in prayer 5 times a day facing Mecca (dawn, mid-day, mid-afternoon, sunset, night); face, hands and feet are washed before prayer. Do not interrupt or walk in front of patient when he/she is saying prayers unless it is an emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Days of observance occur throughout the Muslim lunar calendar
<p>Dying and death</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Death is controlled by God's plan <input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia or any attempt to shorten life prohibited <input type="checkbox"/> Organ or body donation acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy permitted only for medical or legal reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Confession of sins and begging forgiveness often occurs in presence of family upon death <input type="checkbox"/> Important to follow five steps of burial procedure which specifies washing, dressing, and positioning of the body. First step is traditional washing of the body by Muslim of same gender <input type="checkbox"/> As moment of death approaches, Islamic Creed should be recited

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Grief expressed by shedding tears, but forbidden to wail, beat breast, slap face, tear hair or garments, or complain or curse □ The Janazah Prayer (Prayer for the deceased) must be said in Arabic and led by a male- an Imam is preferred. This process should take place within 72 hours after death. Therefore, a death certificate should be signed quickly to facilitate the process.
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Explore what practices are most important to patient/family □ Be aware that some customs prohibit handshakes or any contact between genders □ Female patients may want a female physician □ Be aware of language barriers.
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Tayyib= what is good, pure, clean, wholesome, nourishing, pleasant and tasteful. □ Halal= what is lawful and allowed for Muslims to eat. □ Halal Diet - Pork, and some shellfish prohibited; alcohol is possibly prohibited □ Only vegetable oil to be used □ Any food invoked by a name besides God's may be prohibited □ <u>Children, pregnant women and those who are ill are exempt from fasting laws, however may resist and need support from faith group/leader</u> □ May only eat with right hand, which is considered to be the clean hand
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ No restrictions on blood or blood products, medications, amputations, organ transplants, or biopsies □ Most surgical procedures permitted □ Doctors are seen as helpers of God's will □ Abortion is prohibited except in cases of rape, incest and if the life of the mother is threatened. A fetus is considered a human being after 25-week gestation.
Holy days and Festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Fasting during the month of Ramadan is included in the 5 pillars of Islam and is considered to be a spiritual obligation. Fasting happens from sunrise to sunset. The ill and children are exempt from fasting, but they may join anyway if safe to do so. □ Jum'ah Prayer (Congregational Prayer) held every Friday, the Holiest Day for Muslims and takes place at noon prayer. One may not work during this time. □ Islamic days are based on the lunar calendar. Muslims do not work on two Holy days during the year; 1) Eid-ul-Fitr (Celebration of the Fast Breaking)- this is held on the first day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar. 2) Eid-ul-Aha (Celebration of the Sacrifice of Abraham)- a three day celebration beginning on the 10th day of the twelfth month called Dhul Hijjah. □ These Holy days consist of prayer and a short sermon in congregation followed by food, entertainment, feeding of the poor and visiting the sick and shut-in.

<u>Sunni</u>	<u>Shia</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="256 163 797 222">□ Sunni roughly means ,words and actions' or example of the Prophet Muhammad <li data-bbox="256 260 813 380">□ Believe that when the prophet Muhammad died, it was his wish that the next leader would be elected. Abu Bakr, Muhammad's closest friend, was elected. <li data-bbox="256 417 789 510">□ Believe the caliphs (leaders) of Islam should continue to be elected (and they are). <li data-bbox="256 548 610 573">□ 85% of Muslims are Sunni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="889 163 1321 189">□ Shia roughly means ,Party of Ali' <li data-bbox="889 226 1463 319">□ Believe that when the prophet Muhammad died, it was his wish that Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, would be the new caliph <li data-bbox="889 357 1446 449">□ Believe that the caliphs (leaders) of Islam should continue to be direct descendents of the Prophet Muhammad <li data-bbox="889 487 1458 606">□ Shia Muslims choose to ignore the elected Sunni leaders, and instead follow their own leaders, direct descendents of Muhammad called Imams <li data-bbox="889 644 1227 669">□ 15% of Muslims are Shia <li data-bbox="889 707 1419 827">□ Iran and Iraq are the only countries that have a majority of Shia Muslims. Shia Muslims are the minority in the rest of the Islamic world. <li data-bbox="889 865 1427 924">□ Can also be found in Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, India and Syria <li data-bbox="889 961 1419 1054">□ Some Shia Muslims pray only 3 times a day; all Sunni Muslims pray 5 times a day



Eastern Religions

Buddhism

*There are 3 major Buddhist traditions: Theravada, Mahayana, and Tibetan

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The main goal is to reach spiritual enlightenment through meditation and conscious living <input type="checkbox"/> Personal insight replaces belief in God with the complete study of the laws of cause and effect (Karma)
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May include meditation or chanting according to the form of Buddhism the Buddhist follows
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All rituals at death are aimed at promoting human rebirth in the next life, as well as preventing lower forms of rebirth taking place <input type="checkbox"/> May wish prayers/chanting to take place <input type="checkbox"/> Person's state of mind at moment of death believed to influence rebirth, so they will want to be calm and peaceful <input type="checkbox"/> Person may not want medication while dying if it affects clarity of mind <input type="checkbox"/> Imperative that a Buddhist representative be notified well in advance to see that appropriate person presides over the care of a dying person <input type="checkbox"/> Unexpected death or death of small child may necessitate special rituals <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally, there is a 3-5 day period when the body is not disturbed following death
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for quiet time to observe practices <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure calm and peaceful environment and comfort, especially for dying person
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May be vegetarian, may avoid stimulants (coffee, alcohol, tobacco)
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Illness is a result of karma (law of cause and effect), therefore an inevitable consequence of actions in this or a previous life <input type="checkbox"/> Health is holistic (connect between mind and body); mental cures are important. <input type="checkbox"/> Healing and recovery promoted by awakening to wisdom of Buddha, which is spiritual peace and freedom from anxiety <input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe in healing through faith <input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions on blood or blood products, surgical procedures, organ donation, autopsy <input type="checkbox"/> Medications acceptable if in great discomfort as long as they do not affect state of mind
Holy days and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> While some celebrations are common to all Buddhists, many are unique to

festivals	particular schools
Pregnancy and birth	<input type="checkbox"/> Artificial insemination, sterility testing and birth control acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhists do not condone taking a life; circumstances of patient determine whether abortion acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant women may avoid funerals to prevent bad luck for baby
Rituals or ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> There is a monthly atonement ceremony on the full moon. The major rituals are around baby blessings, lay and monk ordination, marriage and death.

Spiritual instruments, social structure and symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Incense burning, flower and fruit offerings, altars/images/statues of Buddha and ancestors, prayer beads, chant boxes <input type="checkbox"/> Ordained spiritual community involves full ordination for women and men <input type="checkbox"/> Lay vows for women and men <input type="checkbox"/> No institutionally organized hierarchical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Buddha image, lotus, swastika-looking symbol (which represents peace)
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Hinduism

* 3rd largest religion in the world

* Large populations in India, Nepal and Bangladesh

Also

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A wide variety of beliefs held together by an attitude of mutual tolerance and belief that all approaches to God are valid <input type="checkbox"/> Humankind's goal is to break free of this imperfect world and reunite with God <input type="checkbox"/> Reincarnation and karma (law of cause and effect) <input type="checkbox"/> One must perform his/her duties to God, parents, teachers and society
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene very important and bathing is required every day, but bathing after meal may be viewed as harmful <input type="checkbox"/> Hot water may be added to cold, but not the opposite <input type="checkbox"/> Removal of shoes before entering a room
Dying and death Also see Appendix A From Journal of Hospice and Palliative Nursing Hindu End of Life: Death, Dying, Suffering, and Karma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The atmosphere around the dying person must be peaceful. <input type="checkbox"/> The last thoughts or words are of God; the Gita (scripture) is recited to strengthen the person's mind and provide comfort. Religious chanting before and after death is continually offered by family, friends and priest. <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to die at home, as close to mother earth as possible (usually on the ground) <input type="checkbox"/> Active euthanasia viewed as destructive <input type="checkbox"/> No custom or restriction on prolongation of life <input type="checkbox"/> Immediately after death priest may pour water into mouth of deceased and family may wash the body <input type="checkbox"/> Customary for body not to be left alone until cremated <input type="checkbox"/> Autopsy and organ donation acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation is common on day of death
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fetus or children under age 2 may be buried; no rituals observed <input type="checkbox"/> Provide supportive environment and privacy for rites <input type="checkbox"/> Involve family members in plan of care and determine which member will provide personal care <input type="checkbox"/> Father/husband is primary spokesperson to whom questions should be directed - women may not request special care
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Special respect for elders <input type="checkbox"/> Usually vegetarian <input type="checkbox"/> If not vegetarian, may avoid beef and pork <input type="checkbox"/> According to dietary law, right hand is used for eating and left hand for toileting and hygiene
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May fast on special holy days <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer for health considered low form of prayer; stoicism is preferable <input type="checkbox"/> Medications, blood and blood products, donation and receipt of organs

Rituals or ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> On 10th or 11th day after birth, priest performs naming ceremony <input type="checkbox"/> Specific ceremonies vary according to local customs <input type="checkbox"/> Praying, meditating, scripture reading, and recitation is common
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Various sacred writings <input type="checkbox"/> Various objects for rituals- including sandalwood, incense, candle, symbols or pictures, fresh flowers, prayer beads <input type="checkbox"/> Not a church-based religion; no hierarchical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Religious practitioner is priest
	<p>acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pain and suffering seen as result of past actions (Karma) <input type="checkbox"/> Future lives influenced by how one faces illness, disability and/or death
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Several, which are observed at home; some take place in a temple <input type="checkbox"/> Must be barefoot during religious worship or any kind of religious celebration <input type="checkbox"/> Must sit at a lower elevation than where the image of the deity has been placed
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Exact time of birth may be important to family <input type="checkbox"/> Circumcision is uncommon <input type="checkbox"/> May not want to name the newborn immediately <input type="checkbox"/> May be against abortion <input type="checkbox"/> Birth control, artificial insemination and amniocentesis acceptable



Sikhism

* Mostly from Pakistani and Indian region of Punjab

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> God is formless, eternal and unobserved. <input type="checkbox"/> God is the supreme Guru, revealed as guide and teacher throughout the World <input type="checkbox"/> Reincarnation as a cycle of rebirth <input type="checkbox"/> Tension exists between God's sovereignty and human free will <input type="checkbox"/> Salvation is liberation from the cycle of rebirth... Salvation can be achieved through disciplined meditation and spiritual union with God <input type="checkbox"/> Ideal life is one of work, worship and charity <input type="checkbox"/> Equality of all people
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Private worship twice daily, morning and night <input type="checkbox"/> Following of the 10 Sikh gurus (enlightened leaders) and the holy scriptures
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Body is bathed, dressed and cremated <input type="checkbox"/> Floor is washed and covered with white sheets; shoes taken outside the room
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Respect wearing of religious objects; do not remove without permission
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fasting not accepted as a religious practice, although can be observed for medical reasons
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adult members have made a vow never to cut the hair on any part of their body
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meet as a congregation for prayer service and common meal on six primary holidays
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Child is often named by opening the Guru Granth Sahib (book of collected religious writings) at random; the first letter of the first verse on the left-hand page becomes the first initial of the child's name <input type="checkbox"/> There are no particular rituals connected with the birth of a child in the Sikh community. Some sections of the Sikhs recite the five verses of the Morning Prayer, Japji Sahib into the ears of the newborn child. <input type="checkbox"/> Gurthi: A respected, intelligent and favorite member of the family gives a drop of honey to the new born child so as to give the child his characters later in life. This is not a ritual and it mostly takes place in the hospital itself. <input type="checkbox"/> Shushak: When a child is born into the Sikh fold, the maternal grandparents gift him a package called Shushak, which consists of clothes for the child and his family, a spoon, glass, and a bowl for the child, money and gold ornaments for the child according to their financial status .
Rituals and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh Baptisms (Amrit)

ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Naming Ceremonies<input type="checkbox"/> Birth Ceremonies
Spiritual instruments, structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Guru Granth Sahib, collection of religious writings, is the ,Living Word' and the ,Living Guru,' or teacher<input type="checkbox"/> A turban may be worn as a symbol of personal sovereignty and responsibility to others<input type="checkbox"/> Symbolic objects include wooden comb, cloth around chest, and iron bracelet which must never be removed<input type="checkbox"/> Local leadership consists of elected committee of 5 elders<input type="checkbox"/> Khanda, which reflects certain fundamental concepts of the faith (looks like two swords crossed with a circle overlapping).

Other Religions

Bahá'í

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of humanity <input type="checkbox"/> All great religions are divine in origin and represent successive stages of revelation throughout human history <input type="checkbox"/> Unification of humanity and end of racial and religious prejudice <input type="checkbox"/> Search for truth is an individual responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Harmony of religion and science <input type="checkbox"/> Basic education for all children <input type="checkbox"/> Abolition of extreme wealth and poverty <input type="checkbox"/> Equality of the sexes
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily prayer and reading of Bahá'í sacred writings <input type="checkbox"/> All work performed in the spirit of service is considered to be worship
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An individual's reality is spiritual, not physical <input type="checkbox"/> The body is seen as the throne of the soul, worthy to be treated with honor and respect even when dead <input type="checkbox"/> After death, the soul continues to progress to the next stage of existence closer to God <input type="checkbox"/> Body should be buried, not cremated, preferably without embalming unless required by law <input type="checkbox"/> Body must not be transported more than one hour's journey from the place of death <input type="checkbox"/> For persons over 15 years old, the Prayer for the Dead is recited at burial
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide privacy and supportive environment
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bahá'í Fast March 2-20: Bahá'ís over the age of 15 who are in good health abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset each day
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumption of alcohol or mind-altering drugs is forbidden except when prescribed by a physician
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Holy Day festivals per year in which one does not work or go to school <input type="checkbox"/> Other Holy Days also observed
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No special requirements
Rituals or ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily private prayer and annual fast lasting throughout day from sunrise to sunset March 2-20
Spiritual instruments,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bahá'í prayers for private worship <input type="checkbox"/> Local, national and international representatives

social structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Authorized representatives perform special religious rituals<input type="checkbox"/> 9 pointed star
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Native American Spirituality

*No founder; tradition has evolved over centuries, passed down by storytelling
 *More than 2 million people in 300-500 different American Indian tribal groups, each with its own culture and responses to specific situations

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Creator - some tribes use 'God' and 'Creator' interchangeably <input type="checkbox"/> Fundamental inter-connectedness of all natural things, all forms of life, with the land, or Mother Earth, are of primary importance <input type="checkbox"/> Basic sense of community or group/tribe
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prayers, may include using sacred objects, usually private and without strangers present
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Beliefs and practices vary widely from tribe to tribe <input type="checkbox"/> Body is sometimes prepared for burial by family or tribe members <input type="checkbox"/> After person dies, some tribes will not touch deceased person's clothes or belongings
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide time, space, privacy and include tribal spiritual leader <input type="checkbox"/> Do not pretend to be familiar with traditions and do not interfere with them
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> After ceremony or prayer, foods consumed will likely be provided by family
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Health care practices intertwined with religious and cultural beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> May believe that ill health results from not living in harmony or being out of balance with nature and social and supernatural environments
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Closely related to seasonal changes, the moon, provision of food and other life essentials
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant women included in religious ceremonies until delivery
Rituals/ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Performed with intent of seeing, understanding, or obtaining a vision of clarity of oneself and individual issues in order to relate to oneself and others <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer accompanied by burning of sacred plants, i.e. sweet grass, sage, cedar or tobacco
Spiritual instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No written scriptures; ceremonies and beliefs learned by word of mouth and experience <input type="checkbox"/> Sacred and should not be touched without permission, especially by stranger <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine bag: leather pouch usually worn around neck. Do not open or question. <input type="checkbox"/> Religious articles carried by elders must not be touched by anyone other than the elder; if inspection is required, an elder should be invited to provide inspection services

	<input type="checkbox"/> A woman should not come near sacred objects during menstruation
Social Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect for female and male elders <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine Man or Woman will probably not have identification defining member <input type="checkbox"/> Include elder, medicine person, or spiritual leader as colleague to assist in healing process
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> A great variety of symbols which vary from one tribe to another

Rastafarian Movement

*Started in the 1930's in Jamaica

*About 10% of Jamaicans are Rastafarian

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One God, Jah, is the former emperor of Ethiopia (Haile Selassie I) incarnated. He is the messiah promised in the bible. <input type="checkbox"/> Superiority of African civilization and culture <input type="checkbox"/> Being all-natural and as close to nature as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Love and respect for all living things <input type="checkbox"/> The dream of returning to Africa (original home) <input type="checkbox"/> Following of the Old Testament <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual use of marijuana
Clothing and Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Often red, yellow and green (colors of the Ethiopian flag) <input type="checkbox"/> Often wear dreadlocks, either as a religious decision or a style decision. However, not all Rastafarians have dreadlocks <input type="checkbox"/> May not wash hair or body to be 'all natural' <input type="checkbox"/> Buttons and pins with images of Haile Selassie or the Lion of Judah <input type="checkbox"/> More conservative Rastafarians may wear robes and head scarves <input type="checkbox"/> Knit hats
Dying and death	
Facilitating practices	
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited meat- no pork or shellfish (following of Old Testament restrictions) <input type="checkbox"/> May avoid all meat <input type="checkbox"/> May be vegan <input type="checkbox"/> May avoid alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean food is popular, especially healthy fruits and vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> May only want to eat natural foods, called 'I-tal' foods in Jamaica
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Jamaican Patois, the Jamaican Creole, may be hard to understand because of the patient's accent and idioms. However, they can usually understand English since the language is English-based <input type="checkbox"/> Some Rastafarians speak Amharic, the original language of Ethiopia. However, this is not common and most speak English or Jamaican-English.
Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Believe in everlasting life. As a result, they might be hesitant to prepare for death or talk about terminal illness <input type="checkbox"/> Since death is not real, they believe that Haile Selassie I is still alive
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The body may be seen as a church. Therefore it is sacred and they may be hesitant to put anything unnatural into it.
Rituals/ Ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May include discussion, singing, dancing, and marijuana use. <input type="checkbox"/> Readings of the Old Testament

Spiritual instruments, social structure and symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Believe in the spiritual use of marijuana. Marijuana is common during ceremonies or habitually. It is acceptable because it is considered to be natural<input type="checkbox"/> Marijuana is seen as cleansing, spiritual, and written about in the Bible<input type="checkbox"/> May avoid taking any un-natural drugs<input type="checkbox"/> Local, national and international representatives<input type="checkbox"/> Authorized representatives perform special religious rituals
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Santeria

Basics	<input type="checkbox"/> Similar to Voodoo spirituality <input type="checkbox"/> Mix of Catholic rituals and various African deities
Healing	<input type="checkbox"/> May seek a Santeria priest for physical and mental healing who may use herbal formulas, prayers, and ritual
Ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly performed secretly at home because of Santeria's stigma <input type="checkbox"/> Can include spells, magic, and animal sacrifice

Voodoo

*There are many variations of Voodoo...the following describes Voodoo Spirituality found in the United States

Beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> There is one God, Bondye, and many other spiritual beings, called lwa <input type="checkbox"/> lwa are the ruling force of the world, they decide the fate of everything. They are asked for help and for change.
Ceremonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Include drums, dancing and animal sacrifice. Animals are sacrificed to please and thank the spirits. <input type="checkbox"/> Because many Westerners are afraid of Voodoo culture, ceremonies may be held in secret.
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/> Originated in West Africa. It has spread to the Caribbean, the Philippines, North and South America
Healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual healing may include herbs, ritual, and faith healing

Wicca

* Historically have met in small private groups called covens, which are autonomous although many share common traditions

Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Polytheistic - many gods and goddesses <input type="checkbox"/> Principal deity is the Earth/Mother Nature <input type="checkbox"/> Concern for ecological issues <input type="checkbox"/> Reconstructs the ancient worship practices of pre-Christian civilizations such as the Greek, Norse, Celtic, Sumerian or Egyptian <input type="checkbox"/> Law of Nature: no action can occur without having significant repercussions throughout the world, eventually returning to affect the original actor
Daily practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Individual study <input type="checkbox"/> Principal form of worship is usually called ,ritual' or ,circle'
Dying and death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Beliefs and practices vary <input type="checkbox"/> No restrictions on autopsy
Facilitating practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make time and space for rituals; provide privacy and quiet <input type="checkbox"/> Consecrated items must not be removed from patient or handled by anyone but the wearer
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May not desire various foods due to beliefs; ask for preferences
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Patient may want to contact his or her coven to request a healing rite
Holy days and festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Various
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rituals for blessings of pregnancy performed by women of community and are held every three trimesters of pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Ritual of naming and blessing of children
Rituals and ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rituals are a large part of the Wiccan faith <input type="checkbox"/> Full moon held to be a time of great magical energy, a good time for putting a lot of effort into one's spiritual life and work
Spiritual instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written works and codes of conduct <input type="checkbox"/> Consecrated pendant in the form of a pentacle/pentagram (interlaced five pointed star within a circle) is often worn; don't remove without asking <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Various sacred objects including a wand, chalice, wine or juice, incense, candles, images of gods or goddesses, herbs, oil
Social Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly worship and classes

	<input type="checkbox"/> Priests and priestesses perform special rituals
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> Five-pointed star inside a circle <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of symbols are used



Cultures

Major American Cultures

African-American / Black Culture

* An extremely diverse population.

* Variations are strongly influenced by religion, region, urban and rural differences, age, education, history and socioeconomic status. Possible subgroups would include those of Afro-Caribbean descent (See Caribbean Cultures) and recent immigrants from Africa (See African Cultures).

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> May have regional dialects. <input type="checkbox"/> Refusal to sign forms could indicate literacy issues or distrust.
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine who has final role within nuclear family as this can vary widely from family to family.
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear, extended and single parent households. <input type="checkbox"/> Often family friends are referred to with familiar pronouns, i.e. Uncle, Aunt, etc.
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> ,Greens' are often seen as essential for good health. <input type="checkbox"/> May have religious restrictions against certain foods and drinks.
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Address by title and last name. <input type="checkbox"/> Handshakes are appropriate for both men and women.
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain eye contact to show respect and assess/establish trust. <input type="checkbox"/> Silence may indicate lack of trust and/or arrogance.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually father or eldest male family member; however many Black homes

Spokesperson	are led by a strong matriarch, such as a grandmother or single mother. <input type="checkbox"/>
Time orientation	Life issues may take priority over keeping appointments.
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid using medical jargon <input type="checkbox"/> Solicit feedback to assess understanding of the patient and/or his or her family. <input type="checkbox"/> Tragic American history of African Americans being abused as experimental subjects in research, such as the Tuskegee Experiments of the early to mid 20 th century, may spur skepticism and prevent research volunteering and perhaps organ donation.
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> May want professionals to clean and prepare body
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> May have spiritual practices or rituals that can vary from Islam to Baptist Christianity.
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> May show open and public display of immense grief. <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance from family and relatives expected but independence maintained.
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Varies from natural causes and exposure to cold air to God's punishment or work of devil or a spell/curse.
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Historically skeptical, though with clear explanations, needed surgery is accepted
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May have religious restrictions
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Pain scales helpful <input type="checkbox"/> May not wish medication due to fear of addiction
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient and family may wish to include spiritual leader
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> May bring food and/or desserts <input type="checkbox"/> May sleep at bedside
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Give instruction about benefits
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted if indicated
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> May be viewed as God's will
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Active participant <input type="checkbox"/> Father's role varies; may have only females present

Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> May refuse bath/shower or hair washing until bleeding stops
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Varies; may wait until after first trimester
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Older females in family relied on for support
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer, visits from spiritual leader and/or faith group members depending upon spiritual tradition
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> May incorporate faith and folk healing



Hispanic-American Culture

* Hispanic Americans demonstrate wide diversity which makes it difficult to generalize about health beliefs and practices; individuals may subscribe to all, some, or possibly none of these

*Hispanic Americans are defined as anyone of origin of a Spanish-speaking nation (including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, Cuba, Dominican Republic) who self-identify as permanent residents of the U.S., regardless of legal residency status.

*Roman Catholic, Protestant

Preferred Term: Hispanic or Latino

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/> 12.5% of the total US population
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious items, such as rosaries, frequently kept on person or on bed
Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish or American-English
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Differences in word usage depending on individual's home region <input type="checkbox"/> Oral English skills may exceed skill in reading and writing English <input type="checkbox"/> Same gender translation if possible
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Important decisions may require consultation among entire family <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally, father or oldest male holds ultimate authority
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong sense of loyalty, reciprocity, and solidarity among members <input type="checkbox"/> Mothers revered for cultural wisdom and life experience
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Some patients may adhere to ,hot/cold theory' of foods
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Address individuals formally, especially elders; include children
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly influenced by respect <input type="checkbox"/> Direct eye contact often avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Handshaking considered polite and usually welcomed
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually head of household - father or oldest male

	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally present-oriented and punctual
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Requires clear explanation of situation and choices for intervention
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Death a very important spiritual event <input type="checkbox"/> Relative or member of extended family may help wash the body
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayers commonly practiced at bedside of dying patient <input type="checkbox"/> Family time with body before it is taken to morgue
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended families obligated to attend to sick and dying and pay respects <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital environment may be seen as restrictive to family needs
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Holistic understanding of emotional, spiritual, social and physical factors <input type="checkbox"/> Illness seen as a crisis for the entire family
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually accepted if practitioner is trusted
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May decline due to belief that body must be intact for burial
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Patients tend not to complain of pain; assess by nonverbal clues
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Family may want to protect patient from knowledge of seriousness of illness due to concern that worry will worsen health status <input type="checkbox"/> Information usually handled by family spokesperson
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Stressful for individual to be separated from family group <input type="checkbox"/> Large numbers of visitors, usually quiet and respectful
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding and bottle <input type="checkbox"/> May believe breastfeeding provides protection from pregnancy
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Feared
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually described as will of God; may believe are a result of behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Family may prefer to take care of disabled rather than long-term care
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Walking recommended to encourage quick birth <input type="checkbox"/> Fears include unnecessary or dangerous medical interventions, separation from family members and loss of privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Laboring women seen as strong and participatory <input type="checkbox"/> Family women may assist

Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> May resist getting out of bed for or taking showers for several days <input type="checkbox"/> Folk belief is to cover back and wear a wide cloth band around abdomen
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe unnecessary <input type="checkbox"/> May use folk medicine <input type="checkbox"/> Culture may prohibit pregnant women from caring for dying person or attending funerals <input type="checkbox"/> Medications, including iron and vitamins, may be seen as potentially dangerous and avoided, even after delivery
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional family may feel that new mothers should be sheltered from worry <input type="checkbox"/> Baptism of infants may be especially urgent to Christian/Roman Catholic families if prognosis is grave
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic, Protestant <input type="checkbox"/> Virgin of Guadalupe may be a powerful and popular cultural religious image <input type="checkbox"/> Daily prayer common <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer and anointing of the sick may be important rituals <input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritual healing	May use traditional healers or healing remedies

Native American Culture

Preferred Term: Tribal Name

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1.37% of the total US population
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Feathers, depicted in many, many ways, are symbols of prayers, marks of honor or sources of ideas
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do not casually move, examine, or admire medicine bag <input type="checkbox"/> If removal required, allow patient or family to handle it, keep it close to person and replace as soon as possible.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> American-English, French, Spanish, Native American Languages
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do not interrupt speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Long pauses are part of conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Tone expresses urgency; when imperative command required, be direct, emphatic, clear, and calm <input type="checkbox"/> In making request, explain why it is needed; be personable and polite <input type="checkbox"/> Loudness associated with aggression
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Autonomy highly valued; do not assume spouse would make important decision <input type="checkbox"/> Includes responsibility to community, family and tribe
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May be either matriarchal or patriarchal <input type="checkbox"/> Elders respected <input type="checkbox"/> Children not encouraged to find help outside family
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality and respect may lead patient to sharing hospital food with visiting family and friends as well as consume food brought by visitors <input type="checkbox"/> Nutritional guidance should respect religious choices and incorporate them; May believe that when food is blessed it is no longer harmful
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Light touch handshake
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Respect communicated by avoiding eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Keep respectful distance
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Generally, individuals speak for themselves, family members may speak on behalf of person who is ill <input type="checkbox"/> Give information and let family know providers need to know family's wishes for care/treatment; let spokesperson emerge from family <input type="checkbox"/> Spokesperson may not be decision maker

Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis on present moment may conflict with appointment schedules <input type="checkbox"/> Expect careful consideration in answering questions <input type="checkbox"/> Rushing an elder is considered rude and very disrespectful
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Talk about everyone's role in procedure, family's as well as patients <input type="checkbox"/> Allow time for consultation with family before consenting, if possible <input type="checkbox"/> May be unwilling to sign written consents based on political and personal history of documents being misused or fear that 'worst will happen' <input type="checkbox"/> Consent processes may lead families to believe they are not being heard, or not considered competent
Death - body care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional practices include turning and/or flexing body, sweetgrass smoke or other purification, women may want to prepare and dress body. <input type="checkbox"/> Family may choose to stay in room with deceased for a time, then have individual visitation. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask if it is acceptable to prepare body in the room before individual visits
Death - special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared to support or inquire if family wants to bring in tribal healers to attend to spiritual health
Dying process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some tribes avoid contact with the dying <input type="checkbox"/> If family wants to be present 24 hours a day, this may include immediate and extended family and close friends; small children also included <input type="checkbox"/> Although outcome tacitly recognized, positive attitude maintained and family may avoid discussing impending death <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness and mourning done in private, away from patient <input type="checkbox"/> May prefer to have body oriented toward a certain direction prior to death <input type="checkbox"/> Family may hug, touch, sing, stay close to deceased <input type="checkbox"/> Wailing, shrieking and other outward signs of grieving may occur
Illness beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness a culturally specific concept; beliefs about cause may include ghosts, breaking taboos, or loss of harmony w/environment <input type="checkbox"/> Sick role is to be quiet and stoic <input type="checkbox"/> Home and folk remedies may be common
Invasive procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seen as last resort <input type="checkbox"/> May be skeptical of procedures but will allow treatment if needed
Organ donation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be sure to distinguish fact from probability <input type="checkbox"/> Indicate that consent or refusal are equally welcome <input type="checkbox"/> Organ donation generally not desired
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Generally under-treated <input type="checkbox"/> May complain in general terms or may complain to trusted family member or visitor who will relay message to health care worker
Terminal illness discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some cultures prefer not to openly discuss terminal status and DNR orders due to belief that negative thoughts may hasten loss

Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended family may visit or hold rituals for critically ill person
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding and bottle
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> May be feared
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Beliefs in cause vary with individual and tribal culture
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Practices may vary <input type="checkbox"/> Mother or other female relative may be present <input type="checkbox"/> Stoicism encouraged by laboring woman <input type="checkbox"/> Father may be expected to practice certain rituals and be absent following birth
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother and infant may rest and stay indoors for 20 days or until cord falls off. <input type="checkbox"/> Remnant of umbilical cord may have spiritual value; family may request it
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Prenatal care expected and exchange of ideas generally appreciated
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> If mother too ill or young to make decisions, family will be involved <input type="checkbox"/> If baby not expected to live, family may wish to conduct naming or other rituals
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not expect traditional religion to be openly discussed
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> May be combined with Western medicine <input type="checkbox"/> May include having no staff present and no interruption of ritual <input type="checkbox"/> Do not casually admire, examine or move sacred items. If necessary, ask family member to move them

African Cultures

Somali-American Culture

- * Somalia is a country that wraps around the Horn of Africa
- * Somalis may differ in nuances of local lifestyle, but share a uniform language, religion (Muslim) and culture, and trace their heritage to a common ancestor.
- * Since majority are Muslim, see Muslim information.

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/> 35,760 in the US
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> The most widely recognized symbol is the camel, because it provides transportation, milk, meat, income, and status to a majority of Somalis.
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim women cover hair <input type="checkbox"/> Baby/child may wear bracelet made from string and herbs to ward away Evil Eye <input type="checkbox"/> Women may carry a metal object, often a knife, with her at all times to ward off Evil Eye
Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Somali, the national language
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Many social norms are delivered from Islamic tradition <input type="checkbox"/> Common greeting is salam alechem (,God bless you') and to shake hand <input type="checkbox"/> Islamic tradition is that men and women do not touch each other
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually male head of family
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Large extended family includes clans and sub-clans <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim prohibitions will separate adult men and women in most spheres of life
Food practices/ Beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> May have religious restrictions
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Right hand is considered the clean and polite hand to use for daily tasks such as eating, writing and greeting people
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Oldest male in the family
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid using medical jargon <input type="checkbox"/> Elicit feedback to assess understanding
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Important to be aware of Muslim practice requirements regarding washing, position of body, etc.
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of Muslim needs
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> It is considered uncaring for physician to tell patient or family member that patient is dying; it is acceptable to describe the seriousness of the illness <input type="checkbox"/> Birthdays are not celebrated, rather the anniversary of a person's death is commemorated
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> May participate in traditional cultural medicine, which includes fire-burning, herbal remedies, casting and prayer <input type="checkbox"/> May believe illnesses are caused by spirits which reside within individuals and desire a healing ceremony according to cultural traditions <input type="checkbox"/> May believe in concept of Evil Eye, which can be given either purposefully or inadvertently by directing comments of praise at that person, thereby causing harm or illness to befall them - for example, telling parents that their babies are ,adorable' or ,big'. More acceptable comment would be to say that the child is ,healthy.'
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Expected until about age 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Colostrum may be considered unhealthy for baby; supplementation common in early neonatal period <input type="checkbox"/> May believe human milk shouldn't be stored because it will go bad <input type="checkbox"/>
C-Section	May be refused
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Men traditionally do not participate in delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Husband must be involved in any decisions for surgical interventions but he may defer the decision to wife or female relatives

	<input type="checkbox"/> Female relatives are a strong presence and support
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally mom and baby rest in bed indoors for 40 days when female friends visit and prepare food <input type="checkbox"/> During the 40 days, mom may wear earrings made from string placed through a glove of garlic and baby may wear a bracelet made from string and herbs to ward away Evil Eye <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of 40 days, a celebration is held at home of a friend or family member when baby's naming ceremony may occur
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Muslim/Islamic (see Islam section) <input type="checkbox"/> For those who practice, religion has a much more comprehensive role in life than in typical in the Americas or Europe <input type="checkbox"/> During religious holidays, fasting is primary and medications will be taken only at night - although people who are very ill, pregnant women, and children under age 14 are exempt according to Islamic law
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Caribbean Cultures

Cuban-American Culture

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ According to the most recent census, there are 1,241,685 Cuban Americans, both native and foreign born, representing 3.5% of all Hispanics in the US
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Afro-Cuban music and dance were appropriated as symbols of the nation beginning in 1898, when the United States invaded the island, and especially after the Revolution in 1959.
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ English or Spanish
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Tend to speak loudly, may seem aggressive ☐ Tend to make direct requests and statements, may seem aggressive ☐ Lack of eye contact shows disrespect
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ May see physician as a director rather than a partner ☐ Elders are often consulted first for decision-making
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ In Cuba, families are becoming smaller
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
	Health, Illness and Death
Consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Death - body care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐

Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> DNR is usually unacceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Belief that everything possible to keep patient alive should be done <input type="checkbox"/> Belief that DNR indicates giving up hope or abandonment <input type="checkbox"/> Patient and family may have strong fears of death
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> According to traditional Cuban culture, mind, body and spirit are connected <input type="checkbox"/> Physical illness may be thought to be caused by mental stress or supernatural forces <input type="checkbox"/> The sick may be passive and dependent
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/>
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly Catholic, but can practice Santeria, or both.
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Haitian-American Culture

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ New York City, Boston, Chicago, South Florida ☐ It is estimated (as of 2007) that there are approximately 530,897 Haitian Americans
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Blue and red flag ☐ Residents attach tremendous importance to the expulsion of the French in 1804, an event that made Haiti the first independently black-ruled nation in the world, and only the second country in the Western Hemisphere to achieve independence from imperial Europe.
Clothing or Amulets	☐
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Haitian Creole, French, English ☐ For most of the nation's history, the official language has been French. The language spoken by the vast majority of the people is kreyol (Haitian Creole), whose pronunciation and vocabulary are derived largely from French but whose syntax is similar to that of other creoles.
Communication	☐
Decision-making	☐
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Households typically are made up of nuclear family members and adopted children or young relatives. ☐ Elderly widows and widowers may live with their children and grandchildren. The husband is thought of as the owner of the house and must tend to the maintenance of it. ☐ However, the house typically is associated with the woman, and a woman is thought of as the manager of the property and the decision maker regarding use of funds from wages
Food practices/ beliefs	☐
Greetings	☐
Nonverbal	☐
Spokesperson	☐ Women are usually thought of as the marketers of the family, so they usually control their husband's earnings
Time orientation	☐

	Health, Illness and Death
Consents	□
Death - body care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ People are increasingly reluctant to be buried underground, preferring to be interred above ground in a kav, an elaborate multi chambered tomb that may cost more than the house in which the individual lived while alive.
Death - special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Beliefs concerning the afterlife depend on the religion of the individual. Strict Catholics and Protestants believe in the existence of reward or punishment after death. Practitioners of voodoo assume that the souls of all the deceased go to an abode "beneath the waters," that is often associated with lafrik gine ("L'Afrique Guinée," or Africa). Concepts of reward and punishment in the afterlife are alien to vodoun. □ The moment of death is marked by ritual wailing among family members, friends, and neighbors. Funerals are important social events and involve several days of social interaction, including feasting and the consumption of rum. Family members come from far away to sleep at the house, and friends and neighbors congregate in the yard. Men play dominoes while the women cook. Usually within the week but sometimes several years later, funerals are followed by the priè, nine nights of socializing and ritual.
Dying process	□
Illness beliefs	□ Haitians have tremendous faith in informal healing procedures and commonly believe that HIV can be cured.
Invasive procedures	□
Organ donation	□
Pain	□
Terminal illness discussion	□
Visitors	□

	Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/>
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic (about 80%) , Protestant (about 20%), Voodoo (see Voodoo page) <input type="checkbox"/> Many people have rejected voodoo, becoming instead katolik fran (,unmixed Catholics' who do not combine Catholicism with service to the lwa) or levanjil, (Protestants). Catholics and Protestants generally believe in the existence of lwa, but consider them demons to be avoided rather than family spirits to be served.
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> With the spread of Pentecostal evangelicalism, Christian faith healing has spread rapidly.

Jamaican-American Culture

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Largest population is in NYC (especially Queens), South Florida, and Connecticut. ☐ Jamaicans refer to Miami and Brooklyn colloquially as "Kingston 22" or 'Little Jamaica' ☐ Since last census, Jamaican Americans number 910,979, approximately 0.3% of the US population.
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Jamaican flag - black, green and gold ☐ Jamaican Coat of Arms - The Arms shows a male and female Arawak, standing on either side of the shield which bears a red cross with five golden pineapples superimposed on it. The Crest is a Jamaican crocodile surmounting the Royal Helmet and Mantlings.
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ National Dress: Full-flared skirt made of Madras bandana (predominantly red plaid cotton) material worn usually with a white blouse edged with matching bandana. Headwear varies from bandana wrapped in a special design to straw hat decorated with flowers.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ American-English (Official Language) ☐ Jamaican-English ☐ Patois/Jamaican Creole - English-based, but may be hard to understand due to a thick accent and African-based idioms. However, Jamaican Americans almost always understand American-English. Patois is not a written language. ☐ Jamaican accent may drop H's and W's, has a distinctive rhythmic and melodic quality
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Men are predominant in leadership positions in government, the professions, business, higher education, and European-derived religions and engage in physical labor in agriculture. Women work primarily in paid and unpaid household labor, formal and informal retail trades, basic and primary education, clerical and administrative jobs, and social welfare. ☐ Traditionally, woman's place is in the home and women receive less remuneration than men. The appropriate place for men is outside the home, in agriculture, business, government, or recreation. This attitude is changing.
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Families contain a close-knit web of aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents ☐ Families provide economical and emotional support to its members ☐ The family is the most important group a person belongs to, and as such, it the group with whom a person spends most of his/her time developing and maintaining cordial relations

Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The most common greeting is the handshake with direct eye contact, and a warm smile. <input type="checkbox"/> Use the appropriate salutation for the time of day: "good morning", "good afternoon", or "good evening". <input type="checkbox"/> Once a friendship has been established, women may hug and kiss on each cheek, starting with the right. <input type="checkbox"/> Men often pat each other's shoulder or arm during the greeting process or while conversing. <input type="checkbox"/> Address people by their honorific title (Mr., Mrs., or Miss) and their surname until a personal relationship has developed. <input type="checkbox"/> Always wait until invited before using someone's first name. <input type="checkbox"/> As your friendship deepens, you may be asked to call the person by their nickname.
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illness beliefs	
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/>
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity - A wide variety of denominations, with 60% being Protestant. Seventh-Day Adventists and Baptists are the next largest with 9%. <input type="checkbox"/> Rastafarian is also prominent (See Rastafarian Movement). <input type="checkbox"/> According to the latest census,
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Middle Eastern/South Asian Cultures

Arab-American Culture

Preferred Term: Identified by region
(Such as Arab Americans, Middle Eastern Americans)
or by country of choice,
(Such as Egyptian Americans or Palestinian Americans)

*Christian (majority), Muslim

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/> Scarves may be important and essential for women <input type="checkbox"/> May wear blue beads or other amulets to ward off evil eye <input type="checkbox"/> Qur'an or Bible nearby
Language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Major language Arabic, however many variations in dialects, words, and meanings <input type="checkbox"/> May not speak English but not admit it <input type="checkbox"/> Head nodding and smiles do not always mean comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> Will tend to repeat same information several times if feel misunderstood <input type="checkbox"/> May downplay or ignore symptoms because illness can be shameful
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Families make collective decisions
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Includes nuclear and extended family <input type="checkbox"/> Children are sacred (parents usually very strict); expected at bedside
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Eating is important for recovery; offering food is associated with nurturing, caring for, accepting and trusting <input type="checkbox"/> Take time to share a cup of tea or a sweet offering, indicates acceptance <input type="checkbox"/> Follow hot/cold theory; i.e. hot soup helps recovery; do not give ice with drinks <input type="checkbox"/> If Muslim, have food restrictions (see spiritual beliefs)
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Use title and first name <input type="checkbox"/> Approach by shaking hands and acknowledge country of origin and

	<p>something personal about patient or family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Smiling face helps; direct eye contact, even if avoided by patient
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May have flat affect to protect others from accessing their inner feelings <input type="checkbox"/> Respect elders and professionals and are reluctant to take up their time <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable in touching within gender but not between gender <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional women may avoid eye contact with men <input type="checkbox"/> Politeness means not disagreeing outwardly; may respond in ways that they think others want them to respond
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If there is a grandmother, may defer to her counsel <input type="checkbox"/> Physicians expected to make decisions related to care of patient
Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> ,On time' kept for official business and more spontaneous for social and informal gatherings; emphasize importance of appointment times
<p>Health, Illness and Death</p>	
Consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written consents may be problematic because verbal consent based on trust is a more acceptable mode of contracting <input type="checkbox"/> Dislike listening to all possible complications before procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Explain need for written consent, emphasize positive consequences and humanize process
Death - body care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May have special rituals for washing body due to spiritual beliefs
Death - special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be sensitive to spiritual needs
Dying process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Timing of death is seen as God's will <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally do not openly anticipate or grieve before death <input type="checkbox"/> Inform designated head of family of impending death or death <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare private room for family members to meet and grieve <input type="checkbox"/> May avoid discussing death
Illness beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Health defined as gift from God; illness caused by evil eye, bad luck, stress in family, germs, winds, drafts, imbalance in hot and dry and cold and moist, and sudden fears <input type="checkbox"/> Being overweight associated with health and strength <input type="checkbox"/> Pt encouraged to be passive and pampered; not make decisions
Invasive procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Children may have morbid fear of injections and invasive procedures; may want to negotiate having parents out of room during procedures <input type="checkbox"/> High acceptance of treatments and procedures expected to cure; low acceptance of complications, viewed as negligence or lack of expertise
Organ donation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Usually not allowed due to spiritual belief of respect for body
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Very expressive, especially in presence of family <input type="checkbox"/> Pain feared and causes panic; better able to cope if source and prognosis of pain is understood

	<input type="checkbox"/> May have difficulty with numerical scale; use metaphors (fire, knife, etc)
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Will find it difficult to decide on DNR; may lose trust in health care providers if this option is offered
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Social expectations high priority; entire families may visit pt and family
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe colostrum is harmful to baby <input type="checkbox"/> May not request assistance for fear of imposing on staff
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> May be greatly feared
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Believed to be due to wrath of God, God's will, test of endurance <input type="checkbox"/> Disclosure an issue; prefer to 'hide' genetically defective family member; tend to care for pt at home and shun institutionalized care <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic counseling may be refused as believed to defy God's will
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Tend to be passive; i.e. tense muscles and wait for delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Father not expected to participate <input type="checkbox"/> Mother, sister or mother-in-law expected to be present and supportive
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Expect complete bed rest <input type="checkbox"/> May fear bathing or showering <input type="checkbox"/> Very difficult time for first time mother without extended family; needs more understanding, support and networking
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe pregnancy is not an illness and prenatal care unnecessary <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraged to rest, do minimal work and eat well <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no preparation for birth or baby; very present-oriented
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Include mother, father, aunts or grandparents when discussing baby
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> See Christian or Sunni/Shia Muslim in the Spirituality section
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Western medicine respected and sought after <input type="checkbox"/> Home and folk remedies may be used

East Indian- American Culture

* Includes persons from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal

* Cultural groups include Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs

* Variations due to country of origin, level of education, social class, religious affiliation, background and number of years lived in US

Preferred Term: May be religious affiliation rather than nation of origin.

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/> May include: sacred thread around the body, cloth around chest, wooden comb, iron bracelet, scripture verses folded in cloth, etc. Do not remove without permission of patient or family member
Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Many dialects
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Loudness may be interpreted as disrespect, command, emotional outburst and/or violence
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Male family member, usually eldest son, has decision-making power in family, however other family members are consulted
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear and extended family structures
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> May prefer metal utensils for cooking and eating <input type="checkbox"/> Food given much respect <input type="checkbox"/> May use fingers of right hand to eat food and prefer to wash hands before touching food <input type="checkbox"/> May refrain from meat and fish and also fast daily or weekly
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindus and Sikhs press palm of hands together in front of chest while also expressing verbal greeting <input type="checkbox"/> Muslims take the palm of right hand to forehead and bow down slightly while also expressing verbal greeting <input type="checkbox"/> Shaking hands common among men but not women <input type="checkbox"/> Elders addressed by titles
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Touching not common; love and caring expressed through eyes and facial expressions <input type="checkbox"/> Direct eye contact may be considered sign of rudeness or disrespect <input type="checkbox"/> Silence usually indicates acceptance, approval and/or tolerance

Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> If possible, close family members of same gender and older in age
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> May not be extremely time conscious <input type="checkbox"/> May not like to monitor every moment which may impact treatment
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Approach for consent with close family members present for moral support and consultation <input type="checkbox"/> May feel uncomfortable giving written consent <input type="checkbox"/> Explain procedure in simple terms <input type="checkbox"/> May rely completely on health professionals to make decisions
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> May have rituals for body care, including washing
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> If death is imminent, call family members and relatives and allow to stay at bedside <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual needs need to be met including prayer and ritual <input type="checkbox"/> Grief expressed openly
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Unusual to inform dying person of impending death; family members told first and decide whether to tell person
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe illness due to actions (karma) in past lives, OR <input type="checkbox"/> May believe illness can result from past actions, not necessarily in past life, and that illness washes away person's sins, OR <input type="checkbox"/> May believe illness results from body imbalances
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Receptive to blood transfusion and surgery; may prefer to receive blood from individuals of own caste or religion
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> Not usually allowed
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May accept medication, however may also decline except for severe pain
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> May prefer to have doctor disclose diagnosis and prognosis to family first, who will determine whether to and when to tell patient
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Close female family member may stay and participate in care <input type="checkbox"/> May bring food for patient
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Encouraged
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted if necessary
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe to be a result of actions in a past life

Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother may be passive; may moan, grunt or scream <input type="checkbox"/> Female family member present; Fathers may not be present at delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Pain medications may not be accepted <input type="checkbox"/> After birth, allow Muslim father or grandfather to recite prayers in each ear of baby <input type="checkbox"/> After birth of baby, sex of child may not told to mother until placenta delivered
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother may want keep warm <input type="checkbox"/> May not want to shower
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy considered ,hot' state and cool food encouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Hot foods avoided as they may be believed to cause miscarriage
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> If serious, father or mother-in-law approached first <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor expected to reveal diagnosis
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Most tend to be Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh, however may be Jewish or Christian
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> While Western medicine accepted, may also believe in spiritual healing, including recitation of scripture and ritual

Iranian-American Culture

Preferred Term: Persian or Iranian

*Primarily Shiite Muslim, could be Jewish, Christian, Baha'i, Sunni Muslim

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 283,225 to 338,000 in the US (according to the latest census in 2000)
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Iranian Flag: Red, Green, White
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May try to keep body covered to avoid draft <input type="checkbox"/> May wear gold charm on neck chain symbolizing Islam
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi <input type="checkbox"/> Various dialects
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Patriarchal society
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> The concept of family is more private than in many other cultures. Female relatives must be protected from outside influences and are taken care of at all times. It is inappropriate to ask questions about an Iranian's wife or other female relatives. <input type="checkbox"/> Iranians take their responsibilities to their family quite seriously. <input type="checkbox"/> Families tend to be small, only 1 or 2 children, but the extended family is quite close. <input type="checkbox"/> The individual derives a social network and assistance in times of need from the family. <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly relatives are kept at home, not placed in a nursing home. <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty to the family comes before other social relationship, even business. <input type="checkbox"/> Nepotism is considered a good thing, since it implies that employing people one knows and trusts is of primary importance.
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hot and cold balance emphasized
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May prefer use of last name <input type="checkbox"/> Handshake, a slight bow, even standing when someone enters the room are appropriate; greet elderly first

Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Cautious in disclosure of thoughts to non-intimates <input type="checkbox"/> Aware of external judgment and concerned with respectability and good appearance <input type="checkbox"/> Silence can have many meanings
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Father, eldest son, eldest daughter, or eldest male family member
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> May have fatalistic beliefs which can hinder understanding and compliance to present needs
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain procedure/treatment to family spokesperson <input type="checkbox"/> Some families believe in protecting loved one from information
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Family may wish to wash body; do not usually view after (see Muslim)
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to have family at bedside
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Notify head of family or spokesperson first <input type="checkbox"/> Death seen as beginning, not end, of spiritual life (see Muslim spirituality)
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Health a deeply rooted cultural concept <input type="checkbox"/> Body viewed in relationship with environment, society, God, nutrition, family, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Patient generally assumes passive role <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of hope always important
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Expressed by facial grimaces, guarded body posture, moans <input type="checkbox"/> More easily expressed by quality than numeric scale
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk with family spokesperson first <input type="checkbox"/> Bad news may be kept from patient by family
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Welcomed and considered helpful in recovery
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Preferred
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable if necessary

Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> May be viewed in scientific terms or as God's punishment
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Walking encouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Fathers involved <input type="checkbox"/> Female family members supportive and present
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Showering common shortly after birth <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis on rest, diet, hygiene and emotional care
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Diet and rest encouraged as well as refraining from heavy work <input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	Talk first to father of child
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Shiite Muslim; Jewish, Christian, Bahai, Sunni Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Silent prayers at bedside
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> The focus of Iranian cancer patients is Spiritual healing and prayer as a complementary method in addition to medical treatment



East Asian Cultures

Chinese American Culture

*Christian, Taoist

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ 1.2% of the total US population (2007)
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ The main symbol of the nation is the dragon, a fantastical creature made up of seven animals. It is accorded the power to change size at will and to bring the rain that farmers need
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Good luck articles (jade, rope around waist) may be worn to ensure good health and good luck-avoid removing
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Three major languages: Mandarin (official language of China), Wu, and Cantonese□ Various Dialects
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Elderly, especially women, may be unable to read or write□ Nodding politely does not mean understanding□ There are a few common Chinese dialects: Mandarin, Wu, and Cantonese
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Patriarchal society; oldest male usually makes decisions
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Extended families common; wife expected to become part of husband's family□ Children highly valued□ Elders very respected and honored
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Important in maintaining balance of hot and cold in body
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Often shy, especially in unfamiliar environments□ Use of first name could be considered disrespectful
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ The Chinese Non-verbal communication speaks volumes.□ Eye contact avoided with authority figures as sign of respect□ Keep respectful distance□ Asking questions seen as disrespectful; silence may mean respect□ Since the Chinese strive for harmony and are group dependent, they rely on

	<p>facial expression, tone of voice and posture to tell them what someone feels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Frowning while someone is speaking is interpreted as a sign of disagreement. Therefore, most Chinese maintain an impassive expression when speaking. <input type="checkbox"/> It is considered disrespectful to stare into another person's eyes. In crowded situations the Chinese avoid eye contact to give themselves privacy.
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually oldest male in household
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Being on time not valued by traditional societies
Health, Illness and Death	
Consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Involve oldest male of family <input type="checkbox"/> Assess understanding by asking clear questions
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Family may prefer to bathe body after death
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special amulets and cloths may be placed on body
Dying process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May believe dying at home brings bad luck <input type="checkbox"/> May be concerned that person's spirit may get lost
Illness beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Most physical illness caused by imbalance of Yin and Yang (hot and cold) in the body and environment <input type="checkbox"/> Harmony of body, mind and spirit important <input type="checkbox"/> Patient often takes passive role; family expected to care for patient
Invasive procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May be fearful of having blood drawn believing it will weaken body <input type="checkbox"/> May avoid surgery wanting body to be kept intact
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> Not common; want body to remain intact
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May not complain- be aware of non-verbal clues
Terminal illness discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family may prefer that patient not be told of terminal illness or may prefer to tell patient themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Patient may become fatalistic and not want to talk about it
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Common for large numbers of family members to visit
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> If breastfeeding, mother may be expected to eat hot foods to strengthen

	health of baby
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Allowed if necessary
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually blamed on mother as something she did or ate
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable to moan, etc, <input type="checkbox"/> Father usually does not play active role <input type="checkbox"/> Female family members present
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> During first 30 days, mother's pores believed to remain open and cold air can enter body, so may be forbidden to go outdoors or shower/bath <input type="checkbox"/> Diet high in ,hot' foods and ,cold' foods avoided
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe certain activities will affect baby during pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy considered a ,cold' condition so ,cold' foods should be avoided
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Address head of household <input type="checkbox"/> Treat with utmost importance; new baby is center of focus and attention to family
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Christian (Catholic, Protestant), Taoist, Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Incense burning, good luck symbols and special foods
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> May use herbs, acupuncture, acupressure along with Western medicine



Filipino Americans

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 1.5% of the total US population
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Many types of dialects ☐ The three major dialects are Ilocano (the dialect spoken most commonly by Filipinos in Hawaii and on the U.S. mainland); Tagalog, and Cebuano ☐ English is used more than the three major dialects; the Philippines have the third largest English-speaking population in the world
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The extended family is, in effect, the basic unit of Philippine society. Within given households, nuclear families average six to eight members in size. Unmarried adult daughters and sons typically remain in their parents' home and contribute to family support. Additional extended family members such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins also may live in the same house and assume vital roles
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐
	Health, Illness and Death

Consents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illness beliefs	
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/>
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman-Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Buddhist, Animist
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Many of the ingredients of faith healing are generic to many of the healing modalities in Philippine alternative medicine. Many incorporate the use of prayers, massage, herbs; some include "new-age" ingredients of magnets, crystals, and pranic healing



Japanese-American Culture

*Mahayana Buddhist (majority), Shinto, Christian

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0.4% of the total us population (as of 2007)
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese Flag: White and Red
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May use prayer beads
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese, American-English
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May not ask questions about treatment or care <input type="checkbox"/> Illnesses, especially those such as cancer, may not be freely discussed outside family <input type="checkbox"/> May be stoic, self-restrained, hesitant
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Both men and women involved in process
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family oriented; family as main unit rather than individual <input type="checkbox"/> Hierarchical with father being head of household and main authority
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chopsticks <input type="checkbox"/> Rice with most meals
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Formal use of surname <input type="checkbox"/> Greetings in Japan are very formal and ritualized. <input type="checkbox"/> It is important to show the correct amount of respect and deference to someone based upon their status relative to your own. <input type="checkbox"/> If at all possible, wait to be introduced. <input type="checkbox"/> It can be seen as impolite to introduce yourself, even in a large gathering. <input type="checkbox"/> The traditional form of greeting is the bow. How far you bow depends upon your relationship to the other person as well as the situation. The deeper you bow, the more respect you show.
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Typically quiet and polite, may be reserved and formal <input type="checkbox"/> Tend not to disagree <input type="checkbox"/> May have little direct eye contact

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Nodding doesn't necessarily mean understanding or agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Since the Japanese strive for harmony and are group dependent, they rely on facial expression, tone of voice and posture to tell them what someone feels. <input type="checkbox"/> They often trust non-verbal messages more than the spoken word as words can have several meanings. <input type="checkbox"/> The context in which something is said affects the meaning of the words. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the situation to fully appreciate the response. <input type="checkbox"/> Frowning while someone is speaking is interpreted as a sign of disagreement. <input type="checkbox"/> Most Japanese maintain an impassive expression when speaking. <input type="checkbox"/> Expressions to attend to include inhaling through clenched teeth, tilting the head, scratching the back of the head, and scratching the eyebrow. <input type="checkbox"/> It is considered disrespectful to stare into another person's eyes, particularly those of a person who is senior to you because of age or status. <input type="checkbox"/> In crowded situations the Japanese avoid eye contact to give themselves privacy.
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Father; perhaps mother, eldest son, eldest daughter
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Promptness important
	Health, Illness and Death
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize important details
Death - body care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanliness important <input type="checkbox"/> Dignity and preservation of modesty for viewing
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Family members may wish to stay
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Family and patient may avoid discussing dying
Illness beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May believe chronic illnesses are due to karma/bad behavior in this life or past life, or from actions of another family member <input type="checkbox"/> Sick cared for primarily by women <input type="checkbox"/> Patient assumes passive role
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally accepted
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May prefer body to be kept intact
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May be stoic
Terminal illness	<input type="checkbox"/> DNR is difficult choice, decided by entire family

discussion	
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Family members, particularly spouse, may wish to stay by bed <input type="checkbox"/> Entire family and close friends will visit
	Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal delivery preferred
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> May be interpreted as punishment for parents' or family's bad behavior
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Modesty important <input type="checkbox"/> May attempt to control vocal expressions of pain <input type="checkbox"/> Father actively involved
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> New mother expected to rest and recuperate for several weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene important
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Expected from early in pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraged to rest and not 'overdo'
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Best to consult with father before telling mother <input type="checkbox"/> Have father or other family members present for discussion with mother
	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist, Shinto, Christian
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Depends upon religious beliefs

Korean-American Culture

*primarily Christian (Protestant or Roman Catholic), could be Buddhist

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Intergenerational family units. <input type="checkbox"/> 0.5% of the US population (as of 2007)
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Double Hee- Happiness for husband and wife <input type="checkbox"/> Pujok- Good luck, protection <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist Swastika- Auspiciousness
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May wear religious symbols <input type="checkbox"/> Very modest
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> English
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to speak English does not necessarily equate with capability of reading and writing English
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family-focused, although husband, father or eldest son may have final say
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family very important, both nuclear and extended
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May use chopsticks and/or big soup spoons <input type="checkbox"/> Cold fluids with ice may not be welcome
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use title and surname <input type="checkbox"/> Respect toward elders and authority demonstrated by quick quarter-bowing
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Considered rude to direct sole of shoe or foot toward another person <input type="checkbox"/> Eye contact depends on comfort with and trust of others <input type="checkbox"/> Personal space important
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Husband, father, eldest son or eldest daughter
Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuality important <input type="checkbox"/> Fate commonly accepted; everything happens for a reason
	Health, Illness and Death
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Time to think or review may be requested; do not rush or make patient feel

Consents	pressured if possible
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Family will want to spend time with body
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning and crying by family <input type="checkbox"/> May use incense, prayer, chanting (see Buddhism)
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Imminence of death should be told to spokesperson, who will relay information to family
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Health seen as harmony or balance between soul and physical being <input type="checkbox"/> May be viewed as result of bad luck or misfortune; karma (see Buddhism) <input type="checkbox"/> Common for patient to behave as very ill, possibly worse than they actually feel <input type="checkbox"/> Passivity expected
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Use clear, slow explanations
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May believe body needs to remain intact
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May be stoic <input type="checkbox"/> May be very expressive and dramatic, especially when family present
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> May be preferred for family spokesperson to be informed first, then family will inform patient
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent <input type="checkbox"/> Family member may wish to stay with patient
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Education needed to supplement family teaching
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> If indicated
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents may feel responsible, having done something wrong
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Give lukewarm water; no ice <input type="checkbox"/> Father involved <input type="checkbox"/> Mother active and involved
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Rest is most important
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Diet important (,hot' condition; avoidance of cold foods)
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Tell father first <input type="checkbox"/> Important to reassure mother and family that no one is to blame

	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> May be utilized

Vietnamese-American Culture

*Buddhist (majority), Roman Catholic

Cultural and Family Structure	
Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/> 0.55% of the total US population (as of 2007)
Symbols	<input type="checkbox"/> The Vietnamese Flag <input type="checkbox"/> Image of Ho Chi Minh
Clothing or Amulets	<input type="checkbox"/> If Catholic, rosary beads or figure of saint <input type="checkbox"/> If Buddhist, incense may be lit
Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Major languages are Vietnamese, French, and Chinese
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally father or eldest son holds ultimate authority <input type="checkbox"/> Women may withdraw from conflict to maintain family harmony
Family structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Very family oriented, both nuclear and extended
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Chopsticks <input type="checkbox"/> May prefer warm, soft food when ill; nothing cold by mouth
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> In formal setting family name mentioned first; in casual conversation may prefer title and first name <input type="checkbox"/> Do not shake woman's hand unless she offers hers first
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Gentle touch maybe appropriate when having conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Head may be considered sacred and feet profane; be careful in what order touched <input type="checkbox"/> Respect shown by avoiding eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Personal space more distant
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Eldest male in the family
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize importance of appointments, medication schedules
Health, Illness and Death	

Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain procedures as precisely and simply as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Head nodding does not mean understanding or approval
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Body highly respected
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> May wish spiritual/religious ritual <input type="checkbox"/> Important to allow family extra time with body <input type="checkbox"/> May cry loudly and uncontrollably
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform head of family in private room
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Various, including hot/cold balance, supernatural, and Western biomedical
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> May wish second opinion
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May not allow due to respect for body and want that intact
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May be stoic <input type="checkbox"/> Talk about intensity rather than numeric scale
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not tell patient without consulting head of family <input type="checkbox"/> DNR a sensitive issue and a decision made by entire family
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Female family member may stay at bedside <input type="checkbox"/> Many family members and friends visit
	Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> During lactation, mother may adhere to restricted diet which avoids ,cold' and ,windy' foods
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal delivery highly preferred <input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Unconditional acceptance of loved ones, but believe genetic defect in family is God's punishment for wrong behavior
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Woman is expected to ,suffer in silence' <input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene important <input type="checkbox"/> Fathers present but may assume passive role <input type="checkbox"/> Female family member may serve as labor coach
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Seen as critical time <input type="checkbox"/> New mother expected to be with baby at all times <input type="checkbox"/> Not allowed full shower for 2-4 weeks; sponge bath acceptable
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> Mothers must be kept warm and have special hygiene measures, such as only using salt water to clean teeth
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Consult father or other family support person who will decide who will tell mother; best to have doctor present

	Religious and Spiritual Practices
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist (majority), Roman Catholic <input type="checkbox"/> May wish to see chaplain/spiritual leader daily
Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Belief in prayer and support of spiritual leader important

Euro-Asian Cultures

Gypsy / Roma Culture

* There are many different Gypsy groups with diverse cultural practices

Preferred Term: Gypsy or Roma

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> There are an estimated 4 million Romani people in Europe and Asia Minor, but some estimate that there are up to 14 million <input type="checkbox"/>
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Most wear an amulet around neck, especially children <input type="checkbox"/> Allow amulet under pillow or at bedside table <input type="checkbox"/> Never put amulet at foot of bed <input type="checkbox"/> Man's hat and woman's scarf must also be kept at head and not at foot of bed
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Know English (may have a strong accent), however Romani may be first language
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Common greeting is to raise hand palm up and calling out baXt hai sastimos (luck and health) <input type="checkbox"/> Normally very animated but in illness become very anxious <input type="checkbox"/> Naturally very loud (shouting) and argumentative; doesn't always mean they are arguing <input type="checkbox"/> Real anger does erupt, however is usually contained by family members. Rarely violent. Best not to overreact. <input type="checkbox"/> Grief expressed by wailing and calling out to God (Devla) over and over. Women may beat breasts and tear out hair
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals make own decisions, but prefer to consult entire family first; young people (35 and under) may prefer to leave decisions to older relatives <input type="checkbox"/> Eldest person usually in authority <input type="checkbox"/> Spokesperson usually male <input type="checkbox"/> Parents speak for their children, however also listen to wishes of child, often to detriment of child's long term health
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Large extended families of at least 3 generations <input type="checkbox"/> Fierce family loyalty <input type="checkbox"/> Women generally keepers and communicators of medical and spiritual knowledge; have very important role in time of illness <input type="checkbox"/> Children indulged and allowed to express themselves freely <input type="checkbox"/> Family cares for each other; rarely send ill/elderly to institution

	<input type="checkbox"/> Large number of visitors expected - if problem, ask elder in authority to organize system which family member(s) will stay at all time and when and how many at a time may visit. Provide a room/area where all can gather (prefer outside and separate from non-Gypsies).
Food practices/ beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Food must be prepared in a way that is ,clean' - wrapped in plastic, on paper plates or anything disposable, including plastic utensils. Diet is heavy, greasy, and high in salt and cholesterol. May fast on Fridays.
Greetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonverbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Concern over illness shown by being gregarious and assertive <input type="checkbox"/> Can alternate moods quickly <input type="checkbox"/> First reaction often mistrustful; important to take time to establish trust <input type="checkbox"/> May dismiss younger medical personnel as too young to know anything; bring in older professional with younger to establish authority <input type="checkbox"/> Desire close personal contact with family members; very anxious when alone; avoid close-contact with non-Gypsies
Spokesperson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Health, Illness and Death
Consents	<input type="checkbox"/> Illiteracy may be a sensitive issue <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm understanding of medical terminology <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive procedures, operations, anesthesia highly feared <input type="checkbox"/> Organ donation and autopsy usually not accepted
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Body after death may be source of spiritual danger for relatives until it is embalmed
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> May ask for religious object in room or favorite foods and personal article of dying person <input type="checkbox"/> May want to have older female relative present <input type="checkbox"/> May want window open to allow patient's spirit to leave <input type="checkbox"/> Moment of death and last words of patient highly significant; relatives will want to be present and to hear them
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> First inform eldest in authority and ask for help with relatives <input type="checkbox"/> May want chaplain present for purification of body <input type="checkbox"/> Dying person anxious to have all arrangements made
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of spiritual and moral cleanliness results in disease and bad luck; also attracts certain spirits or devil <input type="checkbox"/> Sick person expects family to attend to needs and care from them <input type="checkbox"/> Illness is a crisis for the whole family <input type="checkbox"/> Recognize western medicine as powerful and will be accepted although will also use traditional medicine

Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Will avoid cabbage and other green vegetables and tomatoes, believing they will give baby colic, while drinking beer or whiskey to calm baby
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> If necessary, may prefer to be conscious
Genetic defects	
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Father usually present due to modesty at birth process <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance from older women relatives expected
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Considered ,polluted' for nine days because of birth fluids; must not cook foods or touch men <input type="checkbox"/> Older women relatives may be nearby, but family members' visiting kept to minimum for fear of bringing in spirits that may harm baby <input type="checkbox"/> Babies often swaddled tightly <input type="checkbox"/> Babies believed to be vulnerable to Evil Eye. Giver of evil eye must make a cross with spittle on baby's forehead; if asked to do so, best to comply. People with bushy or heavy eyebrows or lots of body hair believed to often have Evil Eye
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sick baby	<input type="checkbox"/> If baby dies, parents must avoid it at all costs and may leave hospital suddenly
Religious and Spiritual Practices	
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Nominally Christian with a belief system related to spirits, saints, and other spiritual supernatural beings <input type="checkbox"/> Shrine in home - or even in hospital room - is common <input type="checkbox"/> May wish chaplain or priest to offer blessing <input type="checkbox"/> Most Eastern European Roma are <u>Roman Catholic</u> or <u>Orthodox Christian</u> or <u>Muslim</u> . Those in Western Europe and the United States are mostly <u>Roman Catholic</u> or <u>Protestant</u> . In Turkey, Egypt, and the Balkans, the Roma are split into Christian and Muslim populations.

Spiritual healing	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual leaders usually older female relative who may bring in certain plants and medicines for patient
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Russian-American Culture

*Eastern Orthodox, Jewish

	Cultural and Family Structure
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1.13% of the US population
Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The state flag of the Russian Federation
Clothing or Amulets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some elderly women may prefer to wear warm clothing on top of hospital gowns to avoid cold <input type="checkbox"/> May wear religious necklaces
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May speak very little English <input type="checkbox"/> Russian is a major language with few differences in dialect
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May use loud voice, even in pleasant conversations
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Father, mother, eldest son or eldest daughter
Family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Extended family with strong family bonds <input type="checkbox"/> Great respect for elders
Food practices/ beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When ill, prefer soft, warm or hot foods <input type="checkbox"/> May have religious preferences
Greetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Taken very seriously <input type="checkbox"/> Elders may be called 'uncle' or 'aunt' even if unrelated by blood <input type="checkbox"/> The typical greeting is a firm, almost bone-crushing handshake while maintaining direct eye contact and giving the appropriate greeting for the time of day. <input type="checkbox"/> When men shake hands with women, the handshake is less firm.
Nonverbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Direct eye-to-eye contact used <input type="checkbox"/> Nodding is gesture of approval <input type="checkbox"/> Personal space varies; closer for friends/family
Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Same as decision-maker or strongest personality
Time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Will try to be on time for appointments or early
	Health, Illness and Death
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explain procedures, tests, etc with patient and family together and allow

Consents	<p>time for family discussion.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Generally will not consent to research participation.
Death - body care	<input type="checkbox"/> Family members may want to wash body and/or put special clothing on deceased
Death - special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> May have religious/spiritual ritual requests and needs
Dying process	<input type="checkbox"/> May wish DNR to ensure patient comfort <input type="checkbox"/> May not wish autopsy unless absolutely necessary
Illness beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Good health maintained by dressing warmly, avoiding stress, regular bowel movements, nutrition <input type="checkbox"/> May believe illness is ,will of God', ,testing of faith' or ,punishment'
Invasive procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> May be fearful of blood transfusions, unfamiliar routines or unfamiliar equipment <input type="checkbox"/> May be fearful of IV tubing developing ,air in the line'
Organ donation	<input type="checkbox"/> May wish body to remain intact
Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> May be stoic and not ask for medication <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable with numeric pain scale
Terminal illness discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform head of family first
Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Family members and friends expected to visit to provide support
Pregnancy, Birth, Postpartum	
Breastfeeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Very important, supported and encouraged within culture <input type="checkbox"/> Important for breastfeeding mother to be at peace <input type="checkbox"/> Believe breasts must be kept warm
C-Section	<input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal delivery highly preferred
Genetic defects	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as illness beliefs
Labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Women generally passive; follow commands of doctor/midwife <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally believe that drinking castor oil or have enema will encourage an easier birth <input type="checkbox"/> May not desire pain medication <input type="checkbox"/> May wish lighting dim due to believe that it will harm baby's eyes
Postpartum	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional practice is 15 days of bed rest with household help for up to 40 days <input type="checkbox"/> May wish to stay at home for up to 40 days following birth <input type="checkbox"/> May wear pelvic binder to regain figure
Prenatal care	<input type="checkbox"/> May not be utilized unless there is a problem <input type="checkbox"/> Believe pregnant women should be protected from bad news

- Believe certain activities, such as lifting, heavy exercise or skipping steps when going down stairs will result in harm to baby
- Sick baby Tell mother first

Religious and Spiritual Practices

- Religion Eastern Orthodox, Jewish
- May not disclose beliefs freely
- Spiritual healing Spiritual leaders may be important in healing process
- May use folk remedies

Appendix A

From [Journal of Hospice and Palliative Nursing](#) **Hindu End of Life: Death, Dying, Suffering, and Karma**

Susan Thrane, MSN, RN, OCN

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Authors and Disclosures

Susan Thrane, MSN, RN, OCN

Susan Thrane, MSN, RN, OCN, is Senior Research Specialist, City of Hope, Duarte, CA.

Address correspondence to

Susan Thrane, MSN, RN, OCN, City of Hope, 1500 E Duarte Rd, Duarte, CA 91010 (sthane@coh.org).

Abstract and Introduction

Abstract

Hindu suffering can be perplexing to Western thought. With almost 2.3 million Hindus of Indian origin and an additional 1 million practicing American Hindus now in the United States, healthcare practitioners need to know more about the tenets of Hinduism to provide culturally sensitive care. Family and community interconnectedness, karma, and reincarnation are major beliefs of Hinduism. Healthcare decisions may be made by the most senior family member or the eldest son. Karma is a combination of cosmic and moral cause and effect that can cross lifetimes and life lessons learned for spiritual growth. The belief in reincarnation gives great comfort to the dying and their families because they know their loved one will be reborn into a new life and that they are not gone forever. Enduring physical suffering may lead to spiritual growth and a more fortunate rebirth.

Introduction

Death is a universal experience. No matter what our culture, our religion, our race, or our country of origin, we will all die. How we approach death, how we think about suffering and grief, and what we believe happens after we die vary based on our culture, religion, and spiritual beliefs. Spiritual beliefs ground our thinking about end-of-life concepts. Humanists, which include atheists and agnostics, believe that death is the end.^[1] Christians believe that death is the beginning of everlasting life with God.^[2] Hindus believe that while death is the end of this life, it is also the beginning of a new cycle.^[3]

Several estimates of the number of Hindus in America exist. According to the magazine *Hinduism Today*, there are about 2.3 million Hindus of Indian origin and another 1 million practicing American Hindus.^[4,5] Every state in America has at least one Hindu temple, while larger metropolitan centers have many.^[6] Historically, in the West, there has been very little exposure to Hinduism. With the exception of Hare Krishnas, one sect of Hinduism, Hindu people do not believe in proselytizing, nor do they often talk to outsiders about their religion.^[7] With the population of Hindus growing in the United States, healthcare practitioners need to know more about this faith to be able to provide culturally sensitive care.

Case Study 1

Mrs S. is an 85-year-old Hindu woman brought to the emergency room by ambulance. She has a history of congestive heart failure and hypertension. She has been in the hospital three times this year. She is having trouble breathing and "lightheaded," and her family is concerned. After diagnostic tests and

physical examination, it is found that Mrs S. has symptoms of fluid overload, and her ejection fraction is 12%. A urinary catheter is inserted, and she is given a diuretic. Mrs S. goes into shock, develops respiratory failure, and is put on a ventilator. The physician has a discussion with the family about the seriousness of Mrs S.'s condition. Mrs S. does not have an advance directive. Hindus rarely have advance directives because of their belief in karma and reincarnation. After a discussion with Mrs S.'s husband and children, the decision was made to extubate and give comfort measures only. This decision to shift the goals of care to palliation is in line with Hindu beliefs relating to karma. Being kept alive by machine is often viewed as interfering with karma and inhibiting the natural course of death. Hindu people view death as a part of the natural cycle of life. Death is a transition to a new life. This case illustrates the importance of assessing cultural factors in palliative care and good communication to ensure optimum care.

Hinduism 101

Hinduism is the oldest known religion, having been practiced over 8000 years as evidenced by ancient Hindu scriptures.^[8] Table 1 highlights some basic Hindu beliefs. Several newer religions have roots in Hinduism including Jainism, originating around 3000 BCE; Buddhism, originating around 600 BCE; Sikhism originating around the 16th century; and Brahmoism, originating in the 18th century.^[8] Hinduism is unique in that it has no founder, no beginning that we can point to, and no one holy book. The most holy Hindu text is called the Veda: a word that means wisdom. The Veda consists of four books and more than 100,000 verses.^[3] Other holy texts are called the Upanishads and the Puranas.^[8] The *Bhagavad-Gita* (song of God) is generally accepted by all and appears to be the most popular of Hindu sacred texts. According to Jeste and Vahia,^[9] the *Bhagavad-Gita* is the most recent of the sacred texts and the most practical, giving devotees a more practical guide to Vedic wisdom.

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Table 1. Key Issues for Culturally Sensitive Care for Hindus

Highlights of Hinduism

- Oldest known religion still in practice.
- Belief in one God with many forms.
- Spirituality is a way of life for Hindus.
- Family is very important, and healthcare decisions are often made communally with the senior family member or eldest son as the final authority.
- Karma is moral cause and effect of thoughts and actions.
- Reincarnation means being born into a new existence on earth to evolve spiritually.
- Adherence to traditional values depends largely on acculturation.

One of the basic tenets of Hinduism is a belief in one God called Brahman. Brahman can take many forms, which means that there are literally thousands of gods and goddesses in Hinduism that each contains a part, or embodies a characteristic of Brahman. Many Hindus choose one god or goddess as their principal representation of Brahman, but may have many gods and goddesses that they worship or celebrate. Daily worship called *puja* includes lighting incense, prayer, and meditation and is often performed as a family in the morning before everyone starts their day.^[10] Puja can be performed anywhere, but many families either have a room in their home dedicated to worship or at least an altar displaying statues or pictures of their chosen deity.

Reincarnation and Karma

Two important tenets of Hinduism that guide one's actions and influence suffering are karma and reincarnation. Reincarnation essentially means to be born again. The body is like a set of clothes that the

soul removes before putting on new clothing. From a Hindu viewpoint, one can be born as a human, an animal, an insect, or even a plant.^[11] What form the next incarnation takes depends on karma, and one can move up or down the hierarchy. If a person has lived a good life and performed more good deeds than bad, they are born into a more fortunate existence.

Karma guides how a Hindu lives, and each person's deeds both in current and past lifetimes determine what sort of rebirth they attain. Karma is a combination of cosmic and moral cause and effect that crosses lifetimes and life lessons learned for spiritual growth. There are three types of karma: karma from past lives that may or may not be experienced in the present lifetime, karma currently being created, and future karma or karmic experiences saved for a future lifetime.^[12] A devout Hindu will be non-violent on every level including the practice of vegetarianism. The ultimate goal after living many lifetimes is to be released from rebirth or to achieve moksha; becoming one with Brahman.^[13]

Caste System

A discussion of Indian culture and Hinduism would be incomplete without a mention of the caste system. For thousands of years, a strictly defined social structure existed in India. Each group or caste performed certain functions in society. The four main groups were the Brahman or priests; the kshatriyas, which were governors and administrators; the vaisya, who were the merchants and farmers; and the sudras, who performed menial tasks such as street sweeping and were considered spiritually unclean. The caste system was abolished in 1947, and while its influence is fading, some effects remain.

Spiritual Suffering

Suffering for the Hindu is highly related to the concept of karma, for example, "Belief in karma and reincarnation are strong forces at work in the Hindu mind."^{[14] (p29)} Any good or bad thought or action leads to reward or punishment either in this life or a future existence. Hindus believe that there are certain life lessons to be learned before achieving moksha. Working through the karmic situation will resolve that karmic issue resulting in a lesson learned.

A Hindu who is getting older or who has a terminal illness will "tie up loose ends" by apologizing where needed, talking with family and friends to resolve conflicts, and generally fulfilling all known responsibility.^[15] The goal of a well-lived lifetime therefore is to perform good deeds, to practice devotion to God, and to learn the karmic lessons encountered.

Spiritual suffering for a Hindu comes from knowing at the end of life responsibilities are left undone, karmic tasks are not completed, or bad thoughts and deeds predominated. The concept of karma conveys that suffering is part of life. Suffering is a result of past thoughts and actions either in this life or a previous life. By enduring suffering, a Hindu "pays for" or cancels past negative actions. "Suffering can be positive if it leads to progress on a spiritual path, ...to be tested and learn from a difficult experience."^{[16] (p609)} What may appear to be needless suffering to Western minds may be, in fact, a striving to meet death in a clear and conscious state and may be an attempt to atone for karmic debt.

From a nursing perspective, karma and spiritual suffering can have several ramifications. Hindus who feel they need to diminish or alleviate past karma may wish to endure suffering. This may involve fasting, doing penance such as intense prayer or worship, or enduring pain even when medication is available. Fasting can have several forms. The patient may wish to avoid only certain foods or not eat certain meals or at certain times of the day. Other forms of atoning for bad thoughts or deeds can include confession to a guru or priest, repentance either public or private, sacrifice such as shaving the head, religious ceremonies, gift giving to the poor or to the temple, and pilgrimages to sacred spots.^[17] Obviously, participation in these activities depends on whether the patient is at home or in a healthcare facility and whether he/she is ambulatory or near death. Assisting the patient and family to be able to complete religious ceremonies, prayer, or penance may be very important to their spiritual well-being. Assisting the patient and family does not necessarily mean participating; it can mean helping them find

the materials or just assuring them that they will not be disturbed. Allowing private time and space for these activities will be helpful.

Suffering in Death and Dying Practices

Fearing death is natural and results from a fear of the unknown. According to *Hinduism Today*, a person with a terminal illness should tell family and friends so they can prepare for their loved one's death and be happy for them.^[18] Death is the fulfillment of this life and a chance for a better reincarnation, a chance to learn new karmic lessons and to move closer to moksha.

Hindus believe that death must come naturally at the proper time. Life should not be prolonged by aggressive medical means unless it will result in a good quality of life. Prolonging life artificially would result in the soul remaining on earth past its natural time "tethered to a lower astral region rather than being released into higher astral/mental levels."^{[14] (p32)} Hindus will often forgo aggressive treatment when an illness is terminal or there is no hope of recovery. If the patient is a parent of young children, more aggressive treatments are often sought in the hope of prolonging life to provide for the children. Nor should life be cut short willfully. Speeding up death by artificial means would result in a large karmic debt. Suicide would result in many lesser rebirths to "make up" for the karmic debt of ending one's life unnaturally.^[19] Thoughts at the moment of death will result in a greater or lesser rebirth. (See Table 2 for a summary of palliative and end-of-life issues.)

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Table 2. Nursing Care Issues for Palliative and Hospice Care

- Palliative care is aligned with Hindu values.
- Most Hindus are vegetarian. Assisting patients with menu choices or having a dietary consult may help Hindus receive acceptable food. Families may bring food from home.
- Suffering is individual—some may believe that suffering is beneficial for their Karma, some may not.
- Respect the choice patients make for the use of pain medication: most will likely want a moderate amount to relieve pain while maintaining awareness, but some may want little to no pain relief from medications, believing that suffering will ease karmic debt.
- The family may want to turn the bed so the head faces east.
- End-of-life rituals such as chanting in the loved one's right ear and putting *Tulsi* leaves and water from the Ganges River in the mouth are important for the soul's purity and peaceful transition.
- Autopsy is not allowed unless required by law.
- Organ donation is discouraged since it interferes with both the donor and the recipient's karma and the donor's reincarnation.
- **Above all—ask about the family's traditions and needs before the last minute; everyone is unique.**

Hindus may endure pain or uncomfortable symptoms to face death with a clear mind. They may use medication to control symptoms, but may avoid using so much that it reduces their consciousness. Rabindrnath Tagore,^[20] a Hindu philosopher, once said "let me not beg for the stilling of my pain but for the heart to conquer it." Hindus will, if at all possible, be thinking of Brahman at the moment of death and

therefore experience a higher state of consciousness and a higher astral plane after death. Intentionally bringing all one's attention and energy to the top of the head and thinking thoughts of Brahman help the soul leave the body in the highest possible state.

Ideally, a Hindu should die at home surrounded by family and friends who will sing sacred hymns and say prayers or chant the dying person's mantra in his/her right ear if he/she is unconscious. As death approaches, the bed should be turned so the head faces east. Hindus with a terminal illness or certain other disabling conditions are allowed to choose a "self-willed death by fasting"^[19] but must tell their family and community. This is an acceptable method of ending suffering.

Case Discussion Continued

Mrs S. was extubated per her family's wishes. Friends of the family brought a CD player and played some traditional music. The temple priest was called and brought *Tulsi* leaves and sacred water. Mrs S. was given medication to relieve her pain and comfort measures including cool cloths, and positioning with pillows. Family, friends, and the temple priest stayed with Mrs S., reading from holy texts and praying. Her youngest son chanted her mantra into her right ear. The priest applied holy ash to Mrs S.'s forehead and placed a few drops of sacred water and a Tulsi leaf into her mouth for purity and a peaceful death moments before she died.^[21,22]

Postdeath Rituals

After death, all the pictures of deities in the household are turned to face the wall. The body is placed in the home's entryway with the head facing south "reflecting a return to the lap of Mother Earth."^{[15] (p170)} If a patient dies outside the home, the family may want to bring the body home for ritual bathing, dressing, and for friends and family to say goodbye. If necessary, these rituals can take place in a mortuary.

Bodies are always cremated, never embalmed, although they can be frozen for up to 3 days so relatives can attend the funeral rites. The family may wish to witness the cremation and even start the cremation fire. The family may return to collect the ashes directly from the crematorium. After the family returns from the crematorium, everyone bathes, and the entire house is cleaned. The ashes are scattered in an ocean or a river or are sent to India to be scattered in the Ganges River. Infants and young children are the exception to the cremation rule: since they have not accumulated bad karma and are considered pure, infants and young children may be buried.^[23] (See Table 3 for a summary of postdeath practices.)

[CLOSE WINDOW](#)

Table 3. Care Concerns After Death

- Pictures and statues of deities are turned to face the wall.
- Allowing the family to bathe and care for the loved one's body may be an important ritual.
- Cremation occurs within 24 hours if possible.
- Family members attend the cremation and bathe after returning home.
- A ritual time of impurity is observed.
- Ashes are scattered in an ocean or river or sent to India to be scattered in the sacred Ganges River.

The period immediately following death is considered a time of impurity. A pot of water is set in the entryway and is changed every day for 31 days. On the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth days, a meal of the deceased's favorite foods is prepared, and a portion is put in front of a photograph of the deceased. The time of impurity can last from several days to a year. The length of the time of impurity is traditionally determined by caste: the lower the caste, the longer the time of impurity.^[24] During this time, the family lives in seclusion and does not participate in festivals, celebrations, or temple observances.

Professional Care Issues

Healthcare decisions in Hindu families will likely be made by the most senior member of the patient's family or the eldest son.^[25] Hindu culture believes in "human interdependence and interconnectedness, which is understood to be the foundation of well-being."^{[10] (p28)} In other words, Hindus do not have the same concept of individuality and autonomy that Westerners prize so highly; family and community are more important. Other cultural differences may or may not be relevant, depending on the acculturation of the family, and are directly contradictory to Western views. For example, addressing the head of the family first shows respect in Indian culture, while maintaining eye contact with a head of family or elder shows disrespect. The best course is to tread lightly and be aware until discernment can be made of individual preferences.

Accepting the end of life is part of Hindu philosophy. Artificially prolonging life is generally thought of as interfering with karma. Interventions such as intubation, artificial feeding, or very aggressive care in the face of a terminal illness would go against traditional Hindu thinking. Palliative and comfort care are in line with Hindu thoughts on karma and reincarnation, concepts that Western caregivers need to be aware of.

Two other issues that relate to end of life include organ donation and autopsy. Autopsy is avoided unless required by law. Hindus believe that disturbing the body of the deceased is disturbing to their soul and inhibits the soul from moving onward.^[19] Organ transplantation is another practice that is conditionally discouraged. From the donor perspective, a part of the body lives on and interferes with reincarnation. From the recipient perspective, part of the donor's karma is transferred along with the organ especially a major organ such as the heart, liver, or kidney.^[19] Depending on the views of the family, donation of an organ other than the heart, liver, or kidney may be permissible.

Spirituality and culture go hand in hand for Hindus, and Western medicine is beginning to acknowledge the importance of spirituality in healthcare. Spiritual issues are now being addressed for patients, especially at end of life. In a study of 560 nurses who cared for dying patients in Ethiopia, Kenya, India, and the United States, nurses from all four countries identified spiritual interventions such as praying with or praying for the patient and reading from holy texts as helpful or important to patients and families.^[22] The similarities between cultures speak more loudly than the differences. Nurses from all four cultures stressed compassion, respect, and individualizing care based on patients' needs. Specific culturally based interventions mentioned by the nurses from India included allowing family member to offer *Tulsi* leaves (a type of basil) for purity and water from the Ganges River for a peaceful death.^[21,22]

Case Study 2

Mr A. is a 73-year-old Hindu man with end-stage pancreatic cancer. He is cachectic, bed-bound, and unable to eat. Mr A. rates his pain as 10 of 10 and is refusing pain medication saying, "I want to be awake and need to conquer my pain through meditation."

Case Discussion

It would be appropriate to gently question Mr A. and his family regarding his beliefs surrounding both pain medication and his spiritual values. It may be that Mr A.'s spiritual beliefs lead him to suffer pain for the sake of karma, or he may be unaware that pain medication can be given that will not make him unconscious. He may also feel spiritual distress because he cannot overcome his pain with meditation and needs some counseling from his spiritual advisor.^[16] If Mr A. feels he must suffer for his karma, his decision must be accepted.

Conclusion

Nurses who care for Hindus at the end of life whether at home or in the hospital should remember that Hindus are very family oriented and so may have many visitors at one time. There may be singing, chanting, praying, reading from holy books, and shared food. Healthcare decisions will likely be made by a senior family member or eldest son.

With a growing number of Hindus in the United States, it is helpful to know something about Hinduism to provide culturally sensitive care. Some of the main beliefs of Hinduism include the belief in one god named Brahman and a belief in karma and reincarnation. Karma is the principle of cause and effect that can continue over many lifetimes. Any thought or action, good or bad, contributes to karma. Reincarnation is being born into a new life to learn spiritual lessons and to resolve karma from previous lifetimes. Belief in reincarnation gives great comfort to the dying and their families because they know their loved one will be reborn into a new life, and they are not gone forever.

Palliative and hospice care are aligned with Hindu values. Hindus believe that death should neither be sought nor prolonged. Spiritual suffering is connected to karma. Enduring physical suffering at the end of life may reverse bad karma. Hindus would like to die at home surrounded by family. Ideally, they would like to be conscious and be thinking of Brahman at the very moment of death. If the person is not conscious, having the eldest son or a senior family member chant the person's mantra (sacred phrase) in his/her right ear prior to death is helpful. Rituals such as placing *Tulsi* leaves in the mouth, chanting, or washing the body may or may not be practiced by a particular Hindu family. Completing a spiritual assessment of the patient and family is essential to facilitating appropriate spiritual care.

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