
Cultural Values, Beliefs, and Health among Mexican Americans

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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Cultural Values and Cultural Beliefs:
 - Cultural values are those aspects of culture that regulate behavior and social interactions with others.
 - Cultural beliefs are those aspects of culture that attach meanings to events, things, and people.
 - In Mexican American culture, health is perceived as holistic. There is an interconnection between mind, body, and spirit.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Cultural beliefs influence:
 - The etiology or cause of an illness;
 - How one communicates health problems;
 - How one presents symptoms;
 - When and to whom one goes to for care;
 - The congruency of an illness with a medical diagnosis;
 - The willingness or lack thereof to adhere to a plan of care;
 - The use of possible combinations of folk and/or western medicine;
 - The restoration of health.
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Mexican American Folk Medicine

Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

■ *Curanderismo*:

- ❑ Term used to describe the entire Mexican Folk system of disease and healing.
 - ❑ It involves a coherent world view of healing that has deep historical roots.
 - ❑ Modern *curanderismo* is syncretic, holistic, and eclectic; it is a synthesis of beliefs derived from Aztec, Spanish, Judeo-Christian, Spiritualism and Modern Biomedicine.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Mexican American Folk Healers:
 - Partera – Midwife
 - Sobador – Masseuse
 - Senora – Card Reader
 - Curandera/o
 - *Limpias*
 - *Barridas*
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- Mexican American Folk Illnesses:
 - *Empacho* (food lodged in stomach or digestive tract)
 - *Mal de Ojo* (evil eye)
 - *Caida de Mollera* (fallen fontanelle)
 - *Latido* (anorexia or hyperglycemia)
 - *Bilis* (suppressed anger)
 - *Susto* (extreme fright, loss of spirit/soul)
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Mexican American Folk Medicines:
 - Plants (ajo, onion, chaya, garlic, aloe vera, cactus)
 - Precious Stones (silver, gold, copper)
 - Magical Perfumes ("*Iman,*" "*Contra Embrujo,*" "*Yo Puedo Mas Que Tu,*" "*Ven a Mi*")
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Cacha laqua
 1/4 2.50 1/2 4.50
 1 lb 16.00

COLD & FLU
 1/4 1.45 1/2 2.75
 1 lb 16.95

ARTHRITIS
 1/4 2.75 1/2 5.50
 1 lb 18.00

DIABETINA
 1/4 1.75 1/2 3.50
 1 lb 21.00

Chia Seeds
 (Chia)
 4 oz 1.75
 8 oz 3.25

ALFA
 1/4 1.50
 1 lb 12.00

Wheat BRAN SALVADO

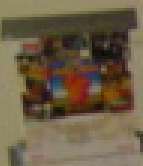
BARLEY
 (CEBADA)

OAT BRAN

Rolled OAT



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
\$1.50
(REDUCTION OF BLOOD PRESSURE)
(LA SANGRE)



Uña de Gato



BOTANICA





Mexican American Cultural Values and Health

Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Understanding Mexican American cultural values as they drive behaviors and expected patterns of behavior are essential for:
 - Examining help-seeking behaviors;
 - Improving patient-provider interactions and health outcomes; and
 - Developing culturally innovative interventions, i.e. using cultural values to motivate behavior change and risk reduction for disease.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Help-Seeking Behaviors:
 - *Familiaismo*
 - *Fatalismo*
 - *Spirituality/Religiosity*
 - *Orgullo*
 - *Machismo*
 - *Marianismo*
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- Patient-Provider Interactions and Health Outcomes:
 - *Carino*
 - *Personalismo*
 - *Confianza*
 - *Dignidad*
 - *Respeto*
 - *Simpatia*
 - *Comunicacion*
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- Development of Culturally Innovative Interventions to Reduce Risks:
 - *Familiaismo*
 - *Spirituality/Religiosity*
 - *Machismo*
 - *Marianismo*
 - Cultural Identity and Ethnic Pride
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Language as a Cultural Value:
 - Many Mexican Americans view Spanish as a cultural value:
 - It is essential in communication;
 - It conveys one's symptoms, e.g. "*dolor*";
 - It includes how we share knowledge, customs, beliefs, and values, e.g. "*dichos*;"
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Language as a Cultural Value:
 - The importance of appropriate interpreters and translators.
 - Do not use patients' relatives or children.
 - Do not use support or janitorial staff.
 - The importance of content and meaning.
 - Forward and Back translation of materials.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- Why is language important?
 - Because Limited English Proficient (LEP) Patients:
 - Receive less Information about therapeutic regimens.
 - Understand less of the instructions related to medication.
 - Are less likely to keep subsequent appointments.
 - Are more likely to make ER visits.
 - Are less likely to receive preventive services.
 - May receive misdiagnoses due to lack of communication.
 - May receive poorer medical care.
 - May be prescribed inappropriate medications.
 - May perceive less quality in the medical care received.
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- Acculturation:
 - In general it is a term that signifies a process of learning about both cultures and can be thought of as a continuum of cultural affiliation and identity.
 - It includes traditional roles and values, together with the process of becoming adapted to the mainstream dominant culture.
 - The importance of examining acculturation lies in understanding potential cultural influences at work in:
 - risk behaviors;
 - knowledge, attitudes, and health beliefs;
 - prevention and intervention;
 - help-seeking behaviors;
 - psychosocial adjustment; and
 - medication adherence.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- **Acculturation:**
 - Acculturation level influences the extent to which any Mexican American cultural values or health beliefs are endorsed.
 - There is differentiation in how any cultural values or health beliefs are perceived and acted upon, especially intergenerational.
 - Different members within each family may have different levels of affiliation with any of the cultural values or health beliefs, especially those that are gender-specific.
 - As acculturation increases, traditional cultural values and health beliefs decrease.
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Cultural Values, Beliefs and Health among Mexican Americans

- In summary, cultural values and beliefs influence many aspects of health and wellness:
 - Understanding cultural values and beliefs can facilitate better health care interactions and outcomes.
 - Can be used to increase cultural proficiency among health and mental health providers.
 - Can be used to motivate people to reduce risk behaviors implicated in disease causation.
 - Can potentially reduce health disparities.
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Muchas Gracias!
