

Muslim: Clinical Cultural Report

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Description of Culture

There are over a billion Muslims throughout the world, many of whom speak hundreds of different languages and live in other countries while still sharing a common practice of the Muslim culture. The Muslim culture is banded together with the common belief that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger. According to a study conducted in 2019, Islam has 1.8 adherents making up roughly 24.1% of the world's population (Mohamed, 2018). This number will continue to increase as the years go on. Studies project about a 10% increase in census.

Religion

Many Muslims are Islam. Islam is monotheistic and worships one God, who is Arabic and known as Allah. Islam began in the city of Mecca, located on the Arabian Peninsula near the Byzantine Empire (History.com Editors, 2018). Many Muslims practice the belief that nothing can happen without Allah's permission as he is the creator of all things. There are five pillars of Islam that Muslims are said to live by. The first rule is having faith in Allah. The second rule is prayer, which is said to occur five times every day. The third rule is alms. Alms means giving money to people in need. The fourth rule is fasting. Fasting consists of eating no food from sunrise to sunset for one month during Ramadan. The last rule is a pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is when Muslims are supposed to go to Mecca at least once in their life.

Healing Belief and Practices

A person's culture determines how pain is perceived, experienced, and communicated. Delivering high-quality care to patients of the Muslim faith requires knowledge of the differences in cultural and spiritual values. Many individuals from the Muslim faith "perceive illness, suffering, and pain and death as a test from God and perceive illness as a trial by which one's sins are removed" (Dedeli & Kaptan, 2019). With this, Muslim patients receive illness with patience, prayer, and meditation. Islam attaches significant importance to health, so taking care of one's health is a religious duty.

Family Life

The standard structure of the Muslim family is three-fold. The most common structure consists of the husband, wife, children, parents who live with them, servants, and elderly relatives. Most Muslims believe that extended families mean more excellent stability, continuity, love, and support for each other. The next group, the central fold of the family, consists of several close relatives. They may or may not will together, but marriage is forbidden between the individuals who do not wear a hijab. These are the people who also have prior claims on the wealth and resources of a person in life and death (Ahmad, 2018). The traditional Muslim family is an extended family.

Communication

Communication amongst the Muslim culture is based on establishing peace, tolerance, and respect for all humans (Basem Attum & Shamoan, 2019). A great majority of Muslims communicate orally by using the Arabic language. Muslims, like most people, utilize gestures and body movements to communicate. Unlike the American culture, it is forbidden for opposite genders to touch, especially in a public setting. Holding hands, hugging each other, and kissing are not accepted and looked down upon (Basem Attum & Shamoan, 2019). With this, is it not uncommon for men to set their hands on each other's shoulders or for two women to engaging in conversation to stand within close proximity.

Diet

Muslims follow the Islamic dietary laws that define which foods are considered halal. Islam rules prohibit the consumption of “alcohol, non-Halal animal fats, pork, by-products of pork, and any animals that have been slaughtered in the name of another deity” (Basem Attum & Shamoon, 2019). The only meat consumption that Muslims can eat must not be slaughtered according to Islamic custom. During Ramadan, Muslims participate in fasting. Fasting includes no foods or liquids, including water is ingested from sunrise to sundown.

Implications of Core Values on Health Care

Much like American culture and many other cultures, Muslims believe that the birth of a child is a very joyous event. Muslims view children as a gift from Allah. In the Qur'an, childbirth and labor are recognized as extremely painful and taxing experiencing (Gifts from God: Childbirth and Postpartum Care in Islam, 2021). In the Qur'an, it states, "respect the womb that bore you." When it comes to Muslim culture concerning labor, there are no guidelines—instead, Muslims use this item to turn to Allah for comfort and assistance. In regard to actual labor, there are a few practices that Muslims follow. When the child is born, the father is to recite the call to prayer in the newborn's ear. This is so that the baby's first words the declaring Allah. Another practice is to "mash a dried date between one's fingers and let the baby have a taste or lick" (Gifts from God: Childbirth and Postpartum Care in Islam, 2021). Doing this acknowledges the baby's need for nourishment because dates are seen to have the highest natural sugar content. Lastly, if the baby is a boy, Muslims do believe the boy is to be circumcised.

Tips and Suggestions when Working with Muslim Patients

Healthcare professionals need to be aware of cultural and regional factors that help provide culturally competent care. One of my suggestions when caring for a Muslim patient would be to monitor these individuals closely during Ramadan since they are abstaining from foods and drinks. Another suggestion or tip would be that we are to respect that time when a Muslim patient engages in prayer. Health care professionals should not interrupt or walking in front of them unless for an emergency. Since Muslim patients do not eat pork or pork by-products, health care professionals should have this noted in their chart and be sure to communicate this to dietary. Lastly, Muslim patients keep physical contact with the opposite gender to a minimum. Therefore, Muslim patients should be assigned to the same gender to provide care for them. Delivering high-quality care to patients of the Muslim faith requires knowledge of the differences in cultural and spiritual values. Significant differences include diet, ideas of modesty, privacy, touch restriction, and alcohol intake restriction.

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