

N432 Cultural Report: Filipino Culture

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In the United States, healthcare facilities are exposed to people of various cultures and ethnicities. To provide efficient, effective, and equal care, a nurse must take time to learn about different cultures. Gaining competency regarding other cultures helps with care and helps patients feel like human beings who are respected and accepted. Well-rounded knowledge concerning different cultures and cultural practices helps to construct a high-quality nurse.

Description and Local Prevalence of Filipino Culture

Since 1581, Filipino have inhabited America, where they began to create communities (Nadal, 2020). However, these Filipino communities continued growing locally as they steadily increased in size. In the '90s, there were very few Filipinos locally, then in 1996, Swann Special Care Center started bringing over nurses from the Philippines (Nadal, 2020). Since then, Filipino communities have continuously grown, with more hospitals and medical centers regularly evolving to adapt to Filipino culture (Asia Society, 2022).

Core Values of Filipino Culture

Religion

Filipinos' religious beliefs consist primarily of Catholicism, with a minimal portion of the culture belonging to Christian cults or various Protestant beliefs (Asia Society, 2022). Many older Filipino adults tend to use religion and focus on their faith in God and home remedies to cope with their illnesses (Stanford Medicine, 2019). Filipinos who have lived in the U.S. for extended portions of their lives are more acclimated to the American health system rather than focusing on religion, like those who migrated here later in life (Stanford Medicine, 2019).

Healing Beliefs and Practices

Early on, in the Filipino community, people relied heavily on religion and spirituality to help them through pain (Stanford Medicine, 2019). Later though, a pain team was formed to promote education and information on pain and suffering and to help improve pain management. Filipinos believe that putting squash leaves on a woman's abdomen during labor helps promote labor; some believe drinking coconut water helps facilitate fast labor (Cultural Atlas, 2022). After birth, the father is responsible for burying the placenta; this indicates that labor is over and the end of pain and blood loss by the mother (Nadal, 2020). The Filipino culture believes women should not bathe after giving birth and during menstruation, as this is seen as a cause of illness and old age. Postpartum women practice massaging their bodies with coconut oil to restore health and expel uterine blood clots (Nadal, 2020).

Family Life

In Filipino households, it is not uncommon to have three generations residing together to help raise and support the family (Cultural Atlas, 2022). Grandparents, whom the families highly respect, play a significant role in raising their grandchildren. Extended families, who usually live close by, provide support. Extended family members are often very involved, as they come over for large celebrations and assist with caring for babies and children (Cultural Atlas, 2022).

Communication

Filipino verbal and nonverbal communication methods differ from those in the United States. Filipinos consider it impolite to stare or look directly at people when talking to them (Nadal, 2020). According to Cultural Atlas (2022), when verbally communicating, Filipinos speak in a passive voice to avoid being perceived as speaking harshly; they try to prevent embarrassment when speaking and will be overly polite when speaking. The authors of the

Cultural Atlas continue by mentioning that Filipinos rarely say no or give a negative response. Non-verbal communication includes physical contact, personal space, pointing, and gestures. Filipinos will walk hand in hand or arm in arm as a physical contact method. Filipinos display personal space, especially when talking to family or someone they know. With family and close friends, they tend to stand an arm's length away while at a farther distance from strangers. In Filipino culture, pointing with the index finger is usually an expression of anger, and gestures, such as putting hands on one's hips, are considered anger (Nadal, 2020).

Diet

Staple foods in Filipino culture consist of white rice, pork, chicken, beef, fish, bananas, mangos, papaya, “adobo” (meat marinated in salt, vinegar, peppercorn, and garlic), organ meat (pigs, cows, and goats) and bread (Nutrition Journal, 2022). Balut (boiled duck embryos) are usually consumed with noodles and soy sauce by males drinking beers late at night (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2023). Wine and beer are popular alcoholic beverages in this culture. During pregnancy, women may avoid eating black and dark-colored food to avoid the birth of an infant with dark skin; however, they drink coconut water to facilitate a faster birth (Queensland Government, 2023). Most diets are not meeting adequate and proper dietary requirements, which results in anemia and malnutrition, causing a spike in hospitalizations.

Core Values on Health Care Related to Pregnancy

Overall, Filipinos are a very religious and myth-based culture (Asia Society, 2022). Some common beliefs surrounding pregnancy include some pregnant women may place great emphasis on being tidy and beautiful, believing that these practices will influence the beauty of their child. Unpleasant emotions experienced by pregnant women may be blamed for causing birthmarks.

The most common birthing position is lying down, but some may prefer squatting (Queensland Government, 2023). It is essential to educate Filipinos throughout their pregnancy on the importance of nutrition, going to doctor's appointments, and making sure they are reporting anything unusual about the pregnancy.

Conclusion: Interacting with Filipino Cultures

Learning important information regarding Filipino culture can make a huge difference when providing adequate and efficient care. Suggestions for working with Filipino patients include remembering that they usually do not make eye contact, so ensure verbal replies after reviewing the information, educating them on having a nutritious diet, as their diet does not have a lot of crucial nutrients needed, and educating them on the importance of going to the doctor and vocalizing their health concerns, especially with pregnancy. By focusing on at least these few aspects of the culture, this can help to promote better well-rounded care and better patient experience.

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