

N432 Culture Report

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N432: Maternal-Newborn Care

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October 1, 2023

In healthcare, it can be challenging to understand cultural beliefs when they differ from what an individual believes. In healthcare, it is important to recognize certain flaws within the system so that people of different backgrounds will receive the same quality of care, no matter what their cultural beliefs.

Religion

Indian people have recently begun to immigrate to the United States; since 1965, the pace of arrivals from India and other non-European nations has been quick (Batalova et al., 2022). Indians are currently the second-largest immigration group in the United States. As of 2021, there were 2.7 million Indian immigrants living in the United States, making up 6% of the total population born outside of the country (Batalova et al., 2022). The state of California has the highest percentage of immigrants from India (20%), followed by Texas (11%) and the combined populations of New York and Illinois (13%) (Batalova et al., 2022).

Many people's lives have been primarily influenced by their religious beliefs; in Indian culture, religion is serious. Politically, culturally, and economically, religion has historically impacted Indian culture (Batalova et al., 2022). As the traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism all originated in India, a sense of pride is linked with the nation's rich religious past (Batalova et al., 2022). Furthermore, although 79.8% of Indians identify as Hindus, many religions practiced there continue to influence modern culture (Batalova et al., 2022). According to Hinduism (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023), everything in the universe manifests as God. Hindus hold that each individual is inherently divine and that the goal of life is to discover and realize this divinity in each individual (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023). The pursuit of personal purification on the path to self-realization by a Hindu is encouraged through one of the three paths or any combination of the three paths:

ritualistic worship, singing of prayers, and devotional surrender to a higher ideal (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc, 2023). Hindu women from orthodox families must cover their faces and be quiet when older male in-laws are present, at home and in public (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023). These customs strongly emphasize respectful interactions, restrict chance meetings, and strengthen family power structures (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023). Hindus, particularly Hindu women, might experience significant distress when modesty gets violated. Women are typically reluctant to strip for inspections, even in medical and healthcare settings (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023). Indians prefer to be seen by a doctor or nurse of the same sex if undressing is necessary (Hindu Association of the Northern Territory Inc., 2023).

Healing beliefs and practices

Karma is an essential concept in Indian culture. Both karma and each person's soul are embraced by God/the ultimate (Wiley, 2023). Both karma are not external to the individual but are part of the same greater whole (Wiley, 2022). Mental and physical suffering is believed to result from past improper deeds (mental, verbal, or physical) in either this lifetime or past life and to be a part of karma's unfolding (Wiley, 2023). It is not seen as a form of punishment but rather as the universe's moral laws responding naturally to earlier evil deeds (Wiley, 2023). Hindu traditions advocate embracing pain as a necessary consequence and realizing that it is not random to cope with it (Wiley, 2023). The debt owed for previous bad conduct is also satisfied by experiencing current hardship. Suffering can be looked at as part of living until finally reaching Moksha. According to Hindu tradition, because we are in human form on Earth, we are subject to the laws of our universe and will, therefore, suffer physical pain (Wiley, 2023). While

the body may experience pain, the self or soul is not hurt or altered because suffering is sensed in the body and is not illusory in the sense that it is not felt (Wiley, 2023).

Hindu women are not permitted to cook or entertain men until the tenth or twelfth day after giving birth when she is deemed clean and permitted to perform regular home duties (The Heart of Hinduism, 2023). To formally welcome the kid into the family, a Jatakarma ceremony takes place (The Heart of Hinduism, 2023). The infant is touched and smelt by the father, who also whispers religious phrases (mantras) into the baby's ears; this takes place to ensure that the kid grows up in a secure and welcoming environment (The Heart of Hinduism, 2023).

Family Life

The Indian joint family is structurally comprised of three to four living generations (Scroope, 2018). All the family members—grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews—who shared a home, a kitchen, and frequently a purse—contributed. With stress on family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity at the sacrifice of individualism, freedom of choice, privacy, and personal space, Indian joint families are stronger, more stable, intimate, robust, and long-lasting (Scroope, 2018). Respect for elders is a foundation of Hindu culture. Sitting to the left of elders, never sitting when elders are standing, bringing gifts on special occasions, not challenging or disputing, and serving their food first are all examples of respecting seniority (Scroope, 2018). Many community members will ask the elders for guidance on any issue (Scroope, 2018).

Communication

Indians communicate indirectly; context is essential (Scroope, 2018). Understanding the context of discussions is aided by nonverbal cues, including body language and gestures

(Scroope, 2018). A highly valued cultural communication norm is politeness. People utilize formal greetings and titles to address others and introduce themselves to new people (Scroope, 2018). To avoid conflict or confrontation, they could try to speak in a way that is appealing to others who are not close to them (Scroope, 2018). The acceptance of physical contact between people of the same gender in this culture is common (Scroope, 2018). However, as it is not suitable for people of different genders to touch one another physically, Indians prefer to avoid prolonged eye contact with those of the other genders or maintain only a fleeting gaze. (Scroope, 2018) Some women may altogether avoid making eye contact.

Diet

Hindus abstain from eating any meal that requires taking life because they believe that all life is interdependent. As a result, vegetarianism is popular among Hindus (Nemec, 2020). Fish, however, is a typical dish in eastern India. Because the cow is considered sacred and its killing for human consumption is typically viewed as against religion while a woman is pregnant, most Hindus avoid eating beef or goods made from it. According to Indian culture, cold food is preferable, while hot food can be unsafe for children (Nemec, 2020). "Savories made of sesame seeds, dry nuts, fenugreek seeds/leaves, garlic, drumsticks, and carom seeds are given to new mothers to boost milk supply (Nemec, 2020). To strengthen the back and reproductive organs after delivery, edible gum cooked with dry almonds and wheat is given (Nemec, 2020). Fresh cow's milk is given first thing in the morning to help improve the quality of the new mother's milk(Nemec, 2020).In order to nourish the body and promote bowel motions, vegetables like beans, squash, carrots, beets, green leafy veg, and zucchini are cooked in ghee (clarified butter) (Nemec, 2020).

Description of core values

Many considerations and safety measures must be taken during the birthing process to provide culturally competent care for the Indian culture. It is preferred in this society to have same-sex healthcare providers; therefore, measures can be put in place to respect the mother and this culture's views. According to Indian culture, rituals and specific prayers are performed to ensure the baby is born healthy (National Library of Medicine, 2023). The provider must respect these cultural customs. Various periods of the prenatal period are associated with a wide range of cultural traditions. Most mothers give birth on the cowshed floor, marked off with cow dung. After giving birth, many women sprinkle cow urine on the newborn before touching him or her. Mothers wait to breastfeed until three days have passed since colostrum is insufficient for the baby (National Library of Medicine, 2023). The practices proven beneficial to the mom and baby should be advocated to keep the Indian cultural practices alive.

Some suggestions for caring for Indian culture would be first to learn their cultural religion even if individuals do not believe or agree with it. Give this culture a space to indulge in rituals and prayer. Religion is a big part of the Indian culture, so they must have a safe place to engage in those cultural traditions. Asking an Indian woman if she prefers to have a male or female doctor is another way of showing cultural competence. Invariably, when caring for people of the Indian culture, it is good to know what foods are best to consume since most Indian people do not consume beef because they consider the cow sacred. It is essential to look at alternative pain options, as though taking medication is not recommended for pain. Indians believe pain is Karma, and they need to deal with it.

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