

N432 Cultural Report: East African

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As of 2021, in Illinois, there are 13,959 foreign-born East Africans, which is 0.8 % of the population (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). East Africans are considered sub-Saharan Africans. Sub-Saharan Africans are primarily spiritual beings. The center of life and the universe is religion. Islam, Christianity, and traditional beliefs are all practiced by them. Christianity or Islam does not oppose modern medicine, although some fundamentalist Christians and Muslims rely on their faith in health and wellness matters (Encyclopedia staff, 2019).

Regardless of their religious affiliation, educated people typically seek modern medicine when ill or injured. Modern Christians believe that God can heal people by using human hands. Therefore, combining modern treatment with age-old home cures and prayers is customary. Although drinking and smoking are relatively common, it is highly uncommon to see women engaging in them. There are more instances of usage and abuse, particularly among young people. Although obesity is extremely rare, those who are overweight are often seen as being in good health. Additionally, slim kids are thought to be unhealthy. However, this belief is shifting, particularly among the younger generation, which is highly concerned with diet and weight (Encyclopedia staff, 2019).

Sub-Saharan African adolescents have one of the highest birth rates, making up a sizeable amount of the region's overall fertility. Adolescent birth rates are high because of their vulnerability and the lack of chances they have. The high rates of unintended pregnancy and unplanned births among adolescents are caused by various factors, including inadequate knowledge of sexual and reproductive health services, legal obstacles to accessing services, provider bias, stigma surrounding premarital sex, and lower decision-making autonomy among married adolescents (Wado et al., 2019).

Worldwide, maternal mortality continues to be a severe issue for public health. This burden is the greatest, with 85% of maternal mortality reported in sub-Saharan Africa. According to studies, 4 million newborns worldwide die in the first week of life, along with 529,000 mothers. Compared to industrialized regions, the estimated maternal mortality ratio (MMR) in underdeveloped nations is 20 times greater. Even though maternal mortality has significantly decreased over the past few decades, it is still well

above the goal decline of less than 70 MMR by 2030 at the current rate. Most births occur at home, so home deliveries are mostly blamed for maternal mortality in sub-Saharan Africa. Many deliveries still occur at home in low- and middle-income nations without the aid of trained attendants. Mothers give birth in an unsanitary setting without a trained birth assistant or life-saving drugs (Regassa et al., 2022). They are more likely to have a higher pain tolerance. Inequities related to maternal education, family wealth, and media access should be addressed in broad interventions to reduce home births, as should gaps between rural and urban locations, poor and wealthy families, and married and unmarried women (Regassa et al., 2022).

The staple foods of the East African diet are corn, wheat, potatoes, rice, milk, tea, fruits, cooked vegetables, and meats. There is a large amount of meat eating. They rarely consume raw veggies, like those seen in salads. Their food is mostly fried. East Africans will provide food and drink to guests who enter their houses as a sign of hospitality and will grow upset if those guests decline the meal. A nurse should accept any gestures from an East African patient to avoid being rude. Making eye contact is only sometimes a good idea, especially amongst younger and older people. Most East Africans are only willing to divulge information if they have built some rapport with the other party (Encyclopedia staff, 2019).

All in all, people in East Africa tend to be kind and upbeat. Other family members, such as uncles and aunts, are frequently called fathers or mothers; cousins are brothers and sisters. Many members of an extended family sharing residences or apartments are not rare (Encyclopedia staff, 2019). They tend to have huge families. As long as the extended family is there for them, a person in the community feels safe.

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