

Culture Report: Amish

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The Amish culture stems from a significant tie to Christianity and a strong value of modesty (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Religion plays a primary role in Amish communities and guides the healing beliefs, family dynamics, and lifestyle choices of Amish individuals (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Amish communities prioritize faith and are widely known for living a seemingly modest and secluded lifestyle. There are several different Amish sects that may differ from each other in attitudes or beliefs (Amish Studies, 2025). For the purpose of this report, an overview of Amish culture will be discussed. However, certain aspects may differ between Amish groups.

Religion

Religion plays a key role in the culture of the Amish and is reflective of Christianity (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Bible is used as a primary text in Amish religion and is interpreted in a literal fashion (Hostetler, 1993). Religious beliefs are rooted in humility, forgiveness, and separation from the world outside (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Religious gatherings or worship services are often performed in the homes of congregation members as they generally do not construct churches within the settlement (Hostetler, 1993). Worship services are generally hosted every other Sunday (Amish Studies, 2025). Admission into the congregation is usually based upon the performance of an adult baptism. The Amish do not believe in baptizing children. Instead, baptisms will occur after the age of 18 when an individual can devote themselves to the church (Hostetler, 1993).

Healing Beliefs and Practices

The health beliefs of the Amish may vary across different groups and individuals. Generally, the Amish are accepting of medical intervention but there are certain groups that prefer alternative health practices (Anderson & Potts, 2020). In comparison to the non-Amish, Amish individuals are less likely to pursue medical intervention for minor health issue and are less likely to accept life-saving interventions, but they do not specifically object to surgery or other technological treatments (Amish Studies, 2025). Home remedies are often sought out by Amish individuals for a more natural healing process (Anderson & Potts, 2020).

Family Life

Amish men and women usually conform to traditional gender roles within the family (Amish Studies, 2025). Amish men often take on the role of the breadwinner for the family while women remain in a homemaking role (Amish Studies, 2025). Families are usually large encompassing 6 to 8 children. The Amish have very close-knit families with considerable amounts of social support from community members (Amish Studies, 2025).

Communication

The Amish most commonly speak English and a language known as Pennsylvania Dutch (Amish Studies, 2025). Pennsylvania Dutch is derived primarily from Palatine German with some English influence (Amish Studies, 2025). This language is often used during religious services as well as when communicating with one another, but English is utilized for reading, writing, and communicating with non-Amish individuals (Amish Studies, 2025).

Diet

Amish families are widely known for their farming abilities. Most food that is consumed is grown and harvested by the settlement or by individual families (Hostetler, 1993). Meals for the Amish consist of fresh, locally grown ingredients with Pennsylvania Dutch influence. Meat, potatoes, vegetables, noodles, dairy, and bread are common staples of the Amish diet (Amish Studies, 2025).

Healthcare Implications

The implications on healthcare for the Amish community generally are associated with their preference for natural remedies, discomfort with the use of technology, limited access to healthcare, and lack of health education (Hostetler, 1993). Natural remedies are preferred within Amish communities which usually causes healthcare not to be sought out until determined necessary (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The use of high-tech or lifesaving interventions may be denied due to religious implications for Amish families. Divine providence is often relied upon in situations relating to health (Hostetler, 1993).

Potential interventions

As with any culture, Amish individuals should be able to make their own decisions on healthcare and ensure their care aligns fully with their beliefs. For the Amish, proper healthcare education should be given to each client based on their level of literacy and should be explained fully. An attempt to incorporate homeopathic remedies into care should be made as well. Multiple options should be given to Amish clients to ensure they are able to choose an intervention that aligns with their beliefs while still maintaining proper care.

References

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