

N432 Clinical Cultural Report

It is estimated that approximately 35 million Hispanics reside in the United States, making culturally competent care crucial in the nursing profession. Hispanics tend to view health as God's will and cope with any illness or medical care through prayer and faith in God. (Ricci, Kyle, and Carmen). "According to the Pew Hispanic survey, 83% of Hispanics claim a religious affiliation, a share slightly higher than that seen among the general public (80%). Compared with the general public, Hispanics are much more likely to be Catholic—62% versus 23%—and less likely to be Protestant—19% versus 50%." (Pew Research). Catholics typically do not believe in pregnancy before marriage, sterilization, or contraceptives. Marriage is viewed as more than a civil contract; it is a "lifelong covenant of love between a man and a woman. It is an intimate partnership in which husbands and wives learn to give and receive love unselfishly, and then teach their children to do so as well. Christian marriage, in particular, is a "great mystery," a sign of the love between Christ and his Church (Eph 5:32) (Catholic Church Academy).

According to a study titled "What Patients Don't Tell Their Doctors," qualities such as compassion, caring, human interest, and kindness ranked as most important when choosing a physician. Male providers are okay for female patients; however, much younger male physicians or a significant language barrier were essential factors to consider when it comes to issues around sexuality. "Laboratory research studies have shown that Hispanic Americans are more sensitive to pain than Whites. For example, compared with Whites, Hispanic Americans feel pain sooner when touching something hot or cold and tolerate the pain for shorter amounts of time" (Hollingshead). However, Hispanic Americans report fewer pain conditions such as back pain or arthritis on health questionnaires, and Hispanics are also more likely to work manual labor jobs, putting them at a higher risk for injury (Hollingshead). Referring back to religion, religious Hispanics would utilize prayer and their faith to get through the pain. Many Hispanics believe that freedom from pain is indicative of good health and that pain is tolerated stoically due to the belief that it is God's will (Ricci et al.).

When it comes to unique practices related to labor and delivery, many Hispanics will rely on the help of their elders. Other interesting practices include burying the umbilical stump or taking it home to keep. Traditional practices include not wanting to take a bath because the baby will then be dirty if you see something

ugly. At the same time, you are pregnant your baby will then be ugly, babies who don't listen to music during pregnancy will be deaf if your belly is pointy they baby will be a boy. Lastly, if you have a lot of heartburn during pregnancy, your baby will be hairy (Baby Center). Some of these traditional practices could interfere with the health of the mother, such as not wanting to take a bath, potentially lead to infection. It is essential to ask the patient what their specific cultural beliefs are to promote the best care while also allowing the patient to follow their cultural practices.

Hispanics place a strong value on family and tend to have large, close-knit families. It is not uncommon for three generations to live in the same household or very close nearby. Grandparents play an important role in their grandchildren's general upbringing as well as their time immediate postpartum. Grandmothers and mothers are the teachers for breast-feeding and encourage it to develop and strengthen the motherly bond and sense of family. "Hispanic cultures have distinct forms of masculine and feminine norms. 'Machismo' stresses male pride and domination, sexual potency, and benevolent sexism towards and idealization of females. 'Marianismo' is a term for the feminine version of machismo and is connected to religious veneration of the Virgin Mary and tends to stress obedience to males, moral purity, motherhood, and self-denial. Lastly, 'familismo' intertwines both terms referring to the valuing of family ties as central to life (Hispanics in Philanthropy).

"The contemporary diet of Hispanics in the United States is heavily influenced by the traditional dietary patterns of their countries of origin, as well as by the dietary practices of the adopted communities in which they live" (USDA). Diets typically consist of grains, beans, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Cheese is used for cooking rather than as a snack, and fluid milk consumption traditionally was low. However, according to the USDA, when measured in terms of the average amount of different types of dairy products consumed by consumers each day, Hispanics allocate a much higher percentage to whole milk (52% vs. 30%). Compared to American consumers as a whole, Hispanics drink 66% more whole milk" (USDA). Family life has traditionally occupied a central place in Hispanic culture, and this has influenced dietary behaviors through home preparation of meals and the practice of families eating together. Hispanics are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes and obesity, and because of this, it is vital to educate patients on balanced nutrition. It is crucial to understand what type of

diet they eat at home and to educate the patients on why nutrition is so crucial for their optimal health and well-being. Lastly, pregnant women tend to want to consume warm foods, especially close to the end of their pregnancy. This is because of the belief that the warm foods will welcome the baby into a warm environment. It is important as a nurse to understand and honor this belief to provide culturally competent care.

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