

Culture: Hispanic

Local Prevalence: Large local population

Religion

Many Hispanic-American households practice the Roman-Catholic faith while transitioning to the Protestant practice (Nabhan-Warren, 2016). These practices include the use of prayers, rosary, attending mass regularly, and Lent's observance (Nabhan-Warren, 2016). Most of these practices will not have too much effect on healthcare. The primary intervention nurses should keep in mind for these clients is to provide and respect their time for prayer and religious study. The most significant impact these religions will have on healthcare will be if a client is in the hospital during Lent. During Lent, those practicing these religions follow a strict diet based on the day of the week. For this population, many hospitals have placed a special menu during Lent's time, which follows this practice to provide religious clients the ability to maintain normality. In the labor and delivery and postpartum units, these clients may request a visit from pastoral care to bless their child.

Healing beliefs and practices

The Hispanic culture utilizes many traditional folk remedies for specific conditions. Most of these practices have been considered harmless after research. However, a pregnant client should receive education about talking to their provider before performing any herbal medicine practices during pregnancy (Juckett, 2013). This culture also utilizes specialists for many conditions, including the use of a midwife during pregnancy and labor (Juckett, 2013). Pain is often considered a weakness in this culture, and clients may be more likely to minimize their pain when in the hospital (Juckett, 2013). A nurse should always encourage their client to be honest, know that they are not under judgment and that the nurse can help take away some of the pain, whether through distraction, relaxation, or pharmacological actions.

Family life

Many families in the Hispanic community live with their immediate families. It is most common for families to have young children in a two-parent household (Juckett, 2013). Often, the grandparents may also live in the family home due to an increased life-expectancy (Juckett, 2013). The elders in these families are very respected and considered wise (Juckett, 2013). The most important aspect of the family, a nurse should consider during care is to address all present in the room, not use first names as a show of respect, and to ask the client about his or her family. These practices show the client that the nurse is trying to be respectful and build a personal relationship with the client (Juckett, 2013). In the labor and delivery unit, the nurse should pay extra attention to the client's spouse.

Communication

In this culture, there are not many implications of communication between the genders. The main concern in this culture between genders revolves around the physical exam. During physical exposure, the client may request a “chaperone” of their gender to be present (Juckett, 2013). The most significant issue in communication with a Hispanic client is going to be barriers of language. Many Hispanic-Americans know English, but it may be broken or very minimal. Nursing staff should keep in mind that the client may be embarrassed by their inability to speak clearly and be patient with them. The most effective option for nurses in this situation would be to utilize an interpreter when available. Nonverbal communication can also be helpful. The use of hand gestures can assist with communication. A nurse should even recognize that in this culture, not making eye contact is a sign of respect, and should not feel insulted by their client and continue providing quality care (Juckett, 2013).

Diet

The diet in the Hispanic culture consists heavily of refined carbohydrates and vegetables. While these food groups are not inherently wrong for you, they can cause an expecting mother during pregnancy. The lack of red meats can cause iron-deficiency anemia, and the high amount of carbohydrates puts the mother at risk for gestational diabetes (Soto et al., 2015). This diet does not typically affect a hospitalization unless the client is religious and currently observing Lent. However, this type of food can cause complications in pregnancy. Nurses should thoroughly educate these clients about the importance of diversity in their diet during this time to maintain appropriate vitamin, mineral, blood sugar, and hemoglobin levels for themselves and their growing baby.

References

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