

Cultural Report

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07/09/2020

Jehovah Witness

The Jehovah Witnesses (JW) is a group that adheres to a form of Christianity but differs in some beliefs. Today, Jehovah's witness membership population is near 8.58 million. Because of these differences, the JW had created their views of the religion in the 1870s. It is acceptable for females of this religion to have male doctors.

Describe cultural and ethnic characteristics that influence health care. Jehovah's Witnesses have a diet that consists mostly of fruits and vegetables but can consume meat or fish. Most other aspects of religion work from a traditional Christian standpoint, such as pain management and family roles. However, Jehovah witnesses do not celebrate birthdays because it is considered a pagan custom.

Jehovah's Witnesses are commonly known for their decision to **refuse blood transfusions**. Ignoring blood can create severe complications in childbirth, where hemorrhaging and bleeding are recurrent complications. The different types of Jehovah's Witnesses have different opinions with blood transfusions. A minority JW may not agree with the refusing blood and may receive it. Some JW may accept the blood that they have donated over time, while others will only accept platelets and plasma.

JW view abortions as the willful taking of human life, which goes against their beliefs. In extreme cases where the lives of the mother and child are in danger, the choice of aborting the baby belongs to the individuals involved. **Jehovah's Witness community avoids contraceptives**. In vitro, fertilization is considered **an act of adultery** in couples who are not married.

Obtaining consent from a Jehovah's Witness must go in a specific order if the individual cannot answer. During an emergency, a provider should accept the care of the

individual even if the patient expresses refusal for a blood transfusion. Some nurses may not agree with all of these ideas created by the JW community. For a nurse to **provide proper care and treatment**, one should stay non-judgmental and be understanding of the decisions made by the client according to their religion. As nurses, we need to educate patients on risks of procedures and possible outcomes of refusals. JW should be encouraged to carry a signed and witnessed advanced directive card refusing blood transfusions. When dealing with children that identify as JW, ensure all documentation is signed and up-to-date. With all patients, it is essential to maintain confidentiality if a JW does decide to have a blood transfusion or make another decision that may not be accepted by their community.

References

Medical Protection. (2014, January). *The challenges of treating Jehovah's witnesses*.

<https://www.medicalprotection.org/southafrica/casebook/casebook-may-2014/the-challenges-of-treating-jehovah%27s-witnesses#:~:text=Jehovah%27s%20Witnesses%20believe%20that%20it,ostracisation%20by%20their%20religious%20community>

Nursing Times. (2002, April 4). *Nursing with dignity. Part 9: Jehovah's Witnesses*.

<https://www.nursingtimes.net/clinical-archive/haematology/nursing-with-dignity-part-9-jehovahs-witnesses-23-04-2002/>

Jehovah's Witnesses. (n.d.). Jehovah's Witnesses—official website. JW.ORG.

<https://www.jw.org/en/>

Objectives:

- Describe cultural and ethnic characteristics that influence health care
- Identify factors that could affect the interaction of the nurse and the client in terms of culturally different health care values
- Discuss ways to provide culturally sensitive care in the Maternal/child setting

Assignment

- **Choose a culture to research**
- Use your book, the internet, and other scholarly resources to research the health beliefs and practices of the culture you choose
- Give a 5-minute oral report on what you found, providing specific tips for patient care on the Mother/Baby and Labor & Delivery units
- Hand in a one-page bibliography including the references you used for your report in APA format

Guidance for your report

- Religion
 - o Describe the religious beliefs of the ethnic group/culture you've chosen
 - o Identify how these relate to health care, i.e., are male providers OK for female patients?
- Healing beliefs and practices
 - o How do people of this culture view pain and suffering?
 - o Are there any special practices related to labor, delivery, and/or the postpartum period?
- Family life
 - o What is the common structure of the family in this culture?

- o What is the role of elders? Live with the family? Respected/not respected?
- Communication
 - o What is the norm for this culture? Are females allowed to speak to strangers, or do their husbands speak for them?
 - o Verbal and nonverbal communication norms
- Diet
 - o Describe the significance of food for members of this culture. Are certain foods eaten after the birth of a child?
 - o How could culturally specific diet requirements impact hospitalization?

Grading rubric (Must achieve 77% i.e., 38.5 points to pass. Not passing constitutes failure of clinical and the course.)

Criteria	Possible points	Points achieved
An accurate description of culture (including local prevalence)	10	
Discuss the core values of the culture you chose	10	
Discuss the implications of these core values on health care, including the childbearing experience.	10	
Provide at least three tips/suggestions/interventions your fellow students can use when working with patients of the culture you chose	15	

Hand in a bibliography with at least two references in APA format	5	
Total grade	50 pts	