

Cultural Diversity in Healthcare

Course
Health
Science

Unit VIII
Strategies
for the
Prevention
of
Diseases

**Essential
Question**
Does
one's
culture
influence
healthcare
decisions?

TEKS
130.204
(c) 12A,
12B, 12C,
12D, 12E

**Prior
Student
Learning**
n/a

**Estimated
time**
2 - 4 hours

Rationale

Delivering quality treatment depends upon understanding how one's culture may influence healthcare decisions.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify the major ethnic groups in the United States
- Understand the interrelationships of culture, religion, and ethnicity relative to health and illness beliefs and practices

Engage

Ask the students to think of home remedies they might currently use. Have two or three students share examples with the class.

Key Points

I. Culture

- A. A set of values, beliefs, attitudes, languages, symbols, rituals, behaviors, and customs of a group of people
- B. Learned, shared, and social
- C. Dynamic and changing

II. Ethnicity

- A. Classification of people based on their national origin or culture
- B. Examples
 1. African American
 2. Asian American
 3. European American
 4. Hispanic American
 5. Middle Eastern, Arabic American
 6. Native American

III. Race

- A. Classification of people based on their physical or biological characteristics
- B. Involves multiple cultures and ethnic groups

IV. Cultural Diversity

- A. Differences based on cultural, ethnic, and racial factors
- B. "Melting Pot" or "Salad Bowl"
- C. Must be considered when providing healthcare
- D. Healthcare providers must have sensitivity, and the ability to recognize

- and appreciate the characteristics of all clients or patients
- E. Holistic care must be developed to include the cultural diversity of America
- F. Holistic care addresses the 3 aspects of well-being:
 - 1. Mental or emotional
 - 2. Physical
 - 3. Social
- G. Areas of cultural diversity
 - 1. Family organization
 - 2. Language
 - 3. Personal space
 - 4. Eye contact
 - 5. Gestures
 - 6. Healthcare beliefs
 - 7. Spirituality
 - 8. Religion
- H. Impacts beliefs about birth, death, health, illness, and healthcare

V. Health

- A. According to the World Health Organization, health can be defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease
- B. Definitions from difference cultures
 - 1. South African – harmony with nature; harmony of mind, body, and spirit
 - 2. Asian – physical and spiritual harmony with nature; balance of yin and yang
 - 3. European – personal responsibility for diet, rest, exercise, and prevention
 - 4. Hispanic – good luck; reward from God; balance between hot and cold forces
 - 5. Middle Eastern– spiritual causes; cleanliness
 - 6. Native American – harmony between man and nature; balance between body, mind, and spirit; spiritual powers
- C. Healthful hints from long ago (Cultural Diversity in Health and Illness)
 - 1. “A sassafras root carried in the pocket guards against illness” (superstition of Old Saint Simons)
 - 2. “Asafetida worn on a string around the neck protects a child from many diseases; and a buckeye carried in the pocket protects against rheumatism” (Blue Ridge and Great Smokey Mountains)
 - 3. “A single, pierced nutmeg, worn around the neck on a string, will protect you from boils, croup, body lice, and various lung diseases” (New England)
 - 4. “A well-ventilated bedroom will prevent morning headaches and lassitude” (1914 Almanac)

VI. Illness

- A. Abnormal functioning of a body's system or systems
- B. Beliefs concerning causes vary based on cultural or ethnic background
- C. Examples (Diversified Health Occupations)
 - 1. South African – spirits/demons; conflicts in life; God's punishment
 - 2. Asian – imbalance in yin and yang; supernatural forces; unhealthy environment
 - 3. European – sin; outside sources (microorganisms or toxins)
 - 4. Hispanic – sins, fright, evil eye, envy; imbalance between hot and cold
 - 5. Middle Eastern – sins, evil eye; spiritual causes
 - 6. Native American – supernatural forces' violation of a taboo; imbalance between man and nature

VII. Folk Remedies

- A. Socialization practices are similar among similar ethnic groups
- B. Religion plays a role in the perception of, interpretation of, and behavior toward health and illness
- C. Women, especially mothers and grandmothers, are prime caregivers
- D. Can create a delay in seeking professional healthcare
- E. Examples (Cultural Diversity in Health and Illness)
 - 1. Asian
 - a. Prevention – Health is a state of physical and spiritual harmony with nature; balance of the two forces yin (cold) and yang (hot)
 - b. Home treatment
 - 1) Cold remedies if yang is overpowering and hot remedies if yin is overpowering
 - 2) Herbal remedies
 - 3) Acupuncture and acupressure
 - 4) Energy to restore balance between yin and yang
 - 2. Jewish
 - a. Prevention – camphor around the neck (in winter) in a small cloth bag to prevent measles and scarlet fever
 - b. Home treatments
 - 1) Sore throat – go to the village store, find a salted herring, wrap it in a towel, put it around the neck, let it stay there overnight, gargle with salt water
 - 2) Boils – fry chopped onions, make a compress, and apply to the infections
 - 3. Native American
 - a. Prevention – keep everything clean and sterile; stay away from people who are sick; regular checkups; blackstrap molasses
 - b. Home treatments
 - 1) Bloody nose – place keys on a chain around the neck

- 2) Sore throat – suck yolks out of egg shells; honey and lemon; baking soda, salt, warm water; onions around the neck; salt water to gargle
- 4. Black African (Ethiopia)
 - a. Prevention – eat hot food such as peppers, fresh garlic, and lemon
 - b. Home treatments
 - 1) Eat hot and sour foods, such as lemons, fresh garlic, hot mustard, and red peppers
 - 2) Make a kind of medicine from the leaves and roots of plants mixed together
 - 3) Evil eye – light some kind of plant root on fire, make the man who has the evil eye smile, and the man talks about his illness
- 5. German
 - a. Prevention – no sweets at meals; a glass of water at meals; cod liver oil; plenty of milk; spring tonic (sulfured molasses)
 - b. Home treatments
 - 1) Coughs – honey and vinegar; hot water and Vicks; boiled onion water, honey, and lemon
 - 2) Earache – a few drops of warm milk in the ear; laxatives when needed
 - 3) Swollen glands or mumps – put pepper on salt pork and tie it around the neck
 - 4) Constipation – Ivory soap suppositories
 - 5) Sore throat – salt water gargle
 - 6) Sore back – hot mustard plaster
 - 7) Sty – cold tea-leaf compresses
 - 8) Fever – mix whiskey, water, and lemon juice to drink before bed; causes the person to sweat and break the fever
 - 9) Headache – boil a beef bone, break up toast in the broth, and drink it
- 6. Hispanic
 - a. Prevention – good health is a reward from God; health is good luck
 - b. Home treatments
 - 1) Hot and cold remedies to restore balance
 - 2) Prayers, medals, candles, and religious rituals
 - 3) Herbal remedies – especially teas
 - 4) Massage
 - 5) Anointing with oil
 - 6) An Azabache (black stone) to ward off the evil eye
- 7. Irish
 - a. Prevention
 - 1) Clean out bowels with senna for eight days

- 2) Every spring, drink a mixture of sulfur and molasses to clean the blood
- 3) Avoid sick people
- 4) Onions under the bed to keep nasal passages clear
- 5) During flu season, tie a bag of camphor around the neck
- 6) Never go to bed with wet hair
- 7) Eat lots of oily food

b. Home treatment

- 1) See a doctor only in emergency
- 2) Fever – spirits of niter on a dry sugar cube, or mix them with water; cold baths or alcohol rubdowns
- 3) Earache – heat salt and put it in a stocking behind the ear
- 4) Colds – tea and toast; chest rub; vaporizer; hot lemonade and a tablespoon of whiskey; mustard plasters; Vicks on chest or in nostrils; hot milk with butter, soups, honey, hot toddies, lemon juice, and egg whites; ipecac
- 5) Coughs – honey and whisky; onion syrup cough medicine; linseed poultice on the chest; flaxseed poultice on the back; red flannel cloth soaked in hot water and placed on the chest all night
- 6) Menstrual cramps – hot milk sprinkled with ginger; shot of whiskey; glass of warm wine; warm teas; hot water bottle on the stomach
- 7) Splinters – flaxseed poultice
- 8) Sunburn – apply vinegar; put milk on a cloth and apply it to the burn; cold, wet teabag on small areas
- 9) Nausea – hot teas; castor oil; hot ginger ale; bay leaf; cup of hot boiled water; potato; baking soda
- 10) Sore throat – paint the throat with iodine, honey and lemon; Karo syrup; paint with kerosene oil and a rag, and tie a sock around the neck; paint with iodine or Mercurochrome, and gargle with salt and water; honey melted Vicks

8. Italian

a. Prevention

- 1) Garlic cloves strung on a piece of string around the neck of infants and children to prevent colds and “evil” stares from other people (which cause headaches and pain or stiffness in the back or neck); red ribbon or cloth on and infant did the same
- 2) Keep warm in cold weather; keep the feet warm
- 3) Never wash the hair or bathe during menstruation
- 4) Never wash hair before going outdoors or at night

- 5) Stay out of drafts
- 6) To prevent “evil” in the newborn, a scissor was kept open under the mattress of the crib
- 7) To prevent bowlegs and keep the ankles straight, up to the age of 6-8 months, a bandage was wrapped around the baby from the waist to the feet
- 8) If infants got their nights and days mixed up, they were tied upside down and turned all the way around
- b. Home treatment
 - 1) Chicken soup for everything from colds to having a baby
 - 2) Boils – cooked oatmeal wrapped in a cloth (steaming hot) and applied to drain the pus
 - 3) Headache – kerchief with ice in it is wrapped around the head; mint tea
 - 4) Upset stomach – herb tea made with Italian herbs
 - 5) Sore throat – honey; apply Vicks to the throat at bedtime and wrap up the throat
 - 6) Sprains – beat egg whites, apply to the sprain, and wrap it up
- 9. Middle Eastern
 - a. Prevention – health is determined by spiritual causes; cleanliness is essential for health; male individuals make decisions on healthcare
 - b. Home treatment
 - 1) Meditation
 - 2) Charms and amulets
 - c. Male health professionals are prohibited from touching or examining female patients

VIII. Healing

A. Religion and Healing

- 1. Vital role in the perception of health and illness
- 2. Rites surrounding birth and death
 - a. 3rd, 7th, 8th, and 40th days after birth are critical for the newborn and the mother – most rituals are observed on these days
 - b. Cutting a lock of hair and animal sacrifice
 - c. Giving silver to the poor
 - d. Circumcision
 - e. Baptism
 - f. Rites to protect the dying and dead person, and the remaining family
- 3. Diet

B. Traditional Etiology: Evil Eye

- 1. Power of the eye strikes the victim

2. Injury, illness, or misfortune is sudden
 3. Person inflicted with the evil eye may not be aware of it
 4. Victim may not know the source of the evil eye
 5. Prevented or cured by rituals or symbols
 6. Explains sickness and misfortune
 7. Prevention and cure involve removal of the spell or evil agents
- C. Traditional Methods of Prevention
1. Use of protective objects
 - a. Amulets
 - b. Bangles
 - c. Talismans
 2. Use of substances ingested or eliminated from surroundings, or worn or hung in the home
 - a. Garlic
 - b. Onions
 - c. Chachayotel
 - d. 1000-year-old eggs
 - e. Kosher foods
 - f. Balance of “hot” and “cold” food
 - g. Balance of yin and yang foods
 3. Religious practices such as burning candles, rituals of redemption, and prayer
 - a. Social, moral, and dietary practices
 - b. Blessing of the Throats on Saint Blaise Day
 - c. Virgin of Guadalupe
 - d. St. Anthony of Padua → barren women
 - e. St. Odilia → blindness
 - f. Our Lady of Lourdes → bodily ills
- D. Beliefs Affecting Therapy
1. Use of healers with divine powers
 2. Natural products; i.e., herbs and berries
 3. Purgatives
 4. Blood-letting
 5. Removal of the person with the evil eye
 6. Avoidance of the provocation of envy
- E. Other Forms of Healing
1. Spiritual healing
 2. Inner healing
 3. Physical healing
 4. Deliverance or exorcism
 5. Auric healing
 6. Pilgrimages
- F. Healthcare providers must be aware of the multitude of sources outside of mainstream medicine available to the patients.

Activity

- I. Complete the Cultural Diversity Case Studies.
- II. Complete the Family Practices in Healthcare.

Assessment

Project Rubric

Completion of Case Studies

Materials

Diversified Health Occupations, Sixth Edition, Louise Simmers

Cultural Diversity in Health and Illness, Second Edition, Rachel Spector

<http://erc.msh.org/mainpage.cfm?file=1.0.htm&module=provider&language=English>

Accommodations for Learning Differences

For reinforcement, students will create a chart comparing their cultural beliefs concerning healthcare with another culture represented in the community.

For enrichment, students will complete the Cultural Awareness Project.

National and State Education Standards

National Health Science Cluster Standards

HLC08.02 Ethics and Legal Responsibilities

Healthcare workers will understand accepted ethical practices with respect to cultural, social, and ethnic differences within the healthcare environment. They will perform quality healthcare delivery.

TEKS

130.204(c)(12)(A) research wellness strategies for the prevention of disease;

130.204(c)(12)(B) evaluate positive and negative effects of relationships on physical and emotional health such as peers, family, and friends;

130.204(c)(12)(C) explain the benefits of positive relationships among community health professionals in promoting a healthy community;

130.204(c)(12)(D) examine access to quality health care; and

130.204(c)(12)(E) research alternative health practices and therapies.

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

English/Language Arts Standards

II Reading

B. Understand new vocabulary and concepts and use them accurately in reading, speaking and writing

III Speaking

A. Understand the elements of communication both in informal group discussions and formal presentations (e.g. accuracy, relevance, rhetorical features, and organization of information)

B. Develop effective speaking styles for both group and one-on-one situations
IV. Apply listening skills as an individual and as a member of a group in a variety of settings (e.g. lectures, discussions, conversations, team projects, presentations, interviews)

Social Studies

I. F. 1. Use a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly.

I. F. 2. Analyze ethical issues in historical, cultural, and social contexts.

Cross-Disciplinary

I. C. 1. Analyze a situation to identify a problem to be solved.

I. C. 3. Collect evidence and data systematically and directly relate to solving a problem

Cultural Diversity Case Studies

Case 1: Family Relationships, Truth-telling

Mrs. Lee was a 49-year-old Cantonese-speaking woman who had emigrated years ago from China to the U.S. She lived with her husband and youngest son, Arnold, age 22. Studies revealed that Mrs. Lee suffered from lung cancer that had metastasized to her lymph nodes and adrenal glands. Arnold did not want Mrs. Lee's diagnosis known to her. Eventually, the cancer spread to her brain. Her physician, knowing her poor prognosis, suggested a DNR to her son, who refused to even discuss the possibility with his mother. Arnold felt that his role as son and family member meant he must protect his mother from "bad news" and loss of hope. He believed that telling her the dim prognosis would be cruel and cause unnecessary stress. Though futile, the son insisted that all heroic methods be used, including a ventilator, to save his mother's life. He accused the hospital staff and physician of racism, and threatened litigation. As a family member, he considered himself, not the doctors or the patient, responsible for his mother's treatment. He felt an overwhelming family responsibility to save his mother from such an early and "bad death," as well as from perceived inadequate treatment.¹

- Had you been the physician, what would you have done?
- Try and see Arnold's point of view. What might he have been thinking?
- How did cultural differences in the telling of bad news, treatment limits and the role of family differ between provider and patient?
- How did Mrs. Lee's age and her son's sense of responsibility to the family affect her care?

Case 2: Conflicts about Disability, Right to Refuse Treatment

A Hmong child was born with a clubfoot. Doctors felt that the foot would cause social embarrassment and make ambulation difficult, and recommended an operation to reshape the foot. The family believed that the foot was a blessing, a reward for ancestral hardships. Because the family believed "fixing" the foot would bring shame and punishment to the family and the Hmong community, they refused treatment. The family went to the Supreme Court to defend their right to refuse treatment. They won.²

- What do you think should have happened in the court case? Why?
- In this case, the operation did not involve life or death. But what if it had?

¹ Muller JH, Desmond BD. Cross-cultural medicine- A decade later: Ethical dilemmas in a cross-cultural context - A Chinese example. West J Med. Sep 1992; 157(3): 323-327.

² Harry B. "Developing Cultural self-awareness". In CASAnet Library: Cultural Competency. <http://www.casnet.org/library/culture/culselaw.htm>.

Adapted from:

<http://www.amsa.org/programs/gpit/cultural.cfm>

Family Practices in Healthcare

Trace your family's practices in the protection and maintenance of health, the prevention of illness, and the diagnosis and treatment of illness. Identify the variety of influences that your culture and ethnicity have on your interpretations of the concepts of health and illness.

1. How does your family define health?
2. How does your family stay healthy?
3. How does your family define illness?
4. What would your family define as a minor medical problem? Give examples.
5. How does your family know when a given health problem does not need medical attention?
6. Does your family "self-diagnose"? Give examples.
7. Does your family use over-the-counter medications? Which ones and when?
8. Who is the first person you turn to when you are ill?

Interview a family member in order to better understand your personal ethnic heritage and belief system.

1. What is the family's ethnic background? Country of origin? Religion?
2. What did they do to maintain health?
3. What did they do to prevent illness?
4. What home remedies did they use to treat illness?

Present this using multimedia technology.

Cultural Awareness Project

Identify the cultural/ethnic/religious groups represented in your community. Research the following information concerning each of the groups identified:

- major health concepts
- beliefs in the causes of illness
- types of traditional healers utilized
- methods of treatment
- response to pain
- beliefs and practices surrounding births
- beliefs and practices surrounding deaths
- healthcare beliefs
- special symbols, books, and religious practices

Present your findings to the class.

Project Rubric

Student: _____ Date: _____

Scoring criteria	4. Excellent	3. Good	2. Needs Some Improvement	1. Needs Much Improvement	N/A
Clearly/effectively communicates the main idea or theme.					
Reflects application of critical thinking.					
Information clearly provided in an organized and thoughtful manner.					
Strong examples used to describe the theme or objective.					
Illustrations follow a logical reasoning.					
Each image and font size is legible to entire audience.					
No spelling, grammatical or punctuation errors.					

NOTE: N/A represents a response to the performance which is "not appropriate."