

Culture, Ethnicity, and Race

Culture The values, beliefs, attitudes, languages, symbols, rituals, behaviors, and customs unique to particular group of people and passed from one generation to the next. It is often defined as a set of rules and is learned, shared, social in nature, dynamic, and constantly changing.

Ethnicity A classification of people based on national origin and/or culture. Members of an ethnic group may share a common heritage, geographic location, social customs, language, and beliefs.

Race A classification of people based on physical or biological characteristics such as the color of skin, hair, and eyes; facial features; blood type; and bone structure.

Assimilation vs Acculturation New group alters own ways and adopts dominant ways vs learning the beliefs and behaviors of the dominant culture and assuming some of the characteristics slowly over a long period of time

Understanding Cultural Diversity

Nuclear Family Mother, Father, Child, generally the basic unit for European American families.

Extended Family Includes the nuclear family plus grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Generally the basic unit for Asian, Hispanic, and Native Americans.

Personal space

Eye contact

Health Concepts

Culture	Health Concepts/Cause of Illness	Traditional Healers	Treatment Methods/Pain Response
South African	Maintain harmony of body, mind, spirit, and nature. Illness can be prevented by diet, rest, and cleanliness, caused by the supernatural (spirits, demons, punishment from God, conflict/disharmony in life)	Root doctor, folk practitioners, voodoo healer	Restore harmony, prayer/meditation, herbs, roots, poultices, oils, religious rituals, charms, talismans, and amulets. Tolerating pain is sign of strength, will express too.

Asian	Health is a state of physical and spiritual harmony with nature. Balance of two energy forces (yin or cold and yang or hot). Illness caused by imbalance between yin and yang, supernatural spirits like God, evil spirits, or ancestral spirits, or unhealthy environment.	Herbalist, physician, shaman healer	Cold or hot remedies to restore balance, acupuncture, acupressure, meditation, energy to restore balance. Pain must be accepted and endured silently. Public pain display brings disgrace, may refuse pain medication.
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Health Concepts (cont)

European	Health can be maintained by diet, rest, and exercise. Immunizations and preventative practices help maintain health. Good health is a personal responsibility. Illness caused by outside sources like germs, pollutants, or contaminants. Also could be punishment for sins, lack of cleanliness, or due to self-abuse (drugs).	Physician, nurse	Medications, surgery, diet, exercise, home remedies, self-care, prayer/religious rituals. Some express pain loudly and emotionally, other value self-control. Medications!
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Hispanic	Health is a reward from God, good luck, balance between hot and cold forces. Illness caused by punishment from God for sins, susto (fright), mal ojo (evil eye), enviada (envy), imbalance b/w hot and cold.	Native healers, curandero, espiritualista, yerbero, brujo	Hot/cold remedies, prayers, medals, candles. and religious rituals. Herbal remedies, especially teas, massage, anointing with oil, wearing an Azabache. Express pain verbally/accept treatment, others feel pain is meant to be endured.
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Health Concepts (cont)

Middle Eastern	Health is caused by spiritual forces, cleanliness is essential for health, male individuals dominate and make decisions on healthcare. Illness caused by spiritual forces, punishment for sins, evil spirits, or "evil eye".	Tradition al healers, physician	Meditation, charms, amulets with verses of the Koran, medications and surgery, male health professionals limited, tolerating pain sign of strength, self-inflicted is a sign of grief
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Native American	Health is harmony between man and nature, balance among body, mind, and spirit, spiritual powers control body's harmony. Illness caused by supernatural forces and evil spirits, violation of a taboo, imbalance between man and nature	Shaman, medicine man	Rituals, charms, and masks, prayer and meditation to restore harmony with nature, plants and herbs, medicine bang, bundle of herbs and blessed by medicine man, sweat lodges, or total immersion in water. Pain is normal part of life, tolerance signifies strength and power.
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