CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN NURSING
CULTURE

Culture is a set of learned values, beliefs, customs and practices shared by a group.

Culture includes: arts, beliefs, customs, folk practices, habits, and institutions that are shared by the group.

These shared thoughts and practices are passed down from one generation to another.
CULTURE

- Cultural diversity describes the existence of many cultures in a society. The United States, for example, has a rich cultural diversity as a result of the many culturally diverse immigrants who have traveled here.

- Subcultures share characteristics with their primary culture, but have distinguishing characteristics of their own as well as the original culture of which they are a part.
CULTURE

- Cultural variation is a result of many things including: age, religion, language/dialect, gender, socioeconomic, location, interaction of the age groups, and the amount of value adoption of the current country they live in.

- Stereotyping is a generalization about a perceived behavior of an individual group.

- Ethnic stereotyping is a fixed concept of how all members of an ethnic group act or think.
CULTURE

- Ethnocentrism is when one believes that their own cultural beliefs and practices are believed to be the best.
- Enculturation is when people learn to be a part of a culture as they are raised in that culture.
Family is the basic unit of every society. It influences attitudes and beliefs which can affect how one views healthcare, health practices, hospitalization, placement in long term care, and en-of-life decisions.

Religion can play a role in influencing a cultures perceptions of health and illness, hospitalization, death and dying. Specific practices observed include dietary rules, dress, modesty, and daily living habits.
Cultural Differences

Communication can be influenced by the speaking of different languages, and may require the use of an interpreter. Non-verbal communication is important relative to personal space, eye contact, gestures, displays of emotions, and touch. Some cultures express more emotions than others.
Cultural Differences

- Health practices need to consider the best way to incorporate alternative therapies including folk remedies, holistic therapies and spiritual interventions. It is important to accommodate safe personal cultural practices while providing healthcare.

- Time measurements have different meanings in different cultures. Nursing care involves rigid schedules which may conflict with how some cultures view time.
Cultural Differences

- Western, biomedical health belief system views health as the absence of disease. Treatment includes physical and chemical means.

- Folk health beliefs are practiced in 3rd world cultures. Illness or disease may be natural or unnatural. Unnatural events upset the harmony of nature, and may be perceived as “evil”. Treatment includes rituals, repentance, and giving into the supernatural forces wishes.
Cultural Differences

- Holistic health belief system incorporates the physical, religious, social, moral and dietary practices to help maintain health balance and illness prevention. Treatment is aimed at restoring a balance of all.
Culturally Considerations in Nursing

- Be sensitive to cultural considerations while providing nursing care to your patients and their families.
- Examples of cultural considerations:
  - Judaism – diet is Kosher with no mixing of milk and meat, animals must be slaughtered according to Jewish law.
  - Seventh Day Adventist – no alcohol or caffeinated products, are mostly vegetarian, Sabbath on Saturday
Culturally Considerations in Nursing

- Mormons – no tobacco or caffeine, special undergarments worn at all times.
- Islam – no pork or alcohol. Meat must be blessed before eating. Wash before prayer time.
- Hinduism – are vegetarians. Daily worship is at a shrine. Sickness may be viewed as a result of a sin in a previous life.
- Buddhism – live life “right”. Believe in reincarnation.
- Taoism/Confucianism-believe that humans and nature are inseparable. Mix of magic and religion.