

# Towards Health Care Quality for Asian American

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## Topics

- Importance.
- Understanding Asian cultural health beliefs
- Challenges Asian cultural health beliefs present
- Closing the cultural gap.

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## Importance

Census Bureau, National Population Estimates Show:

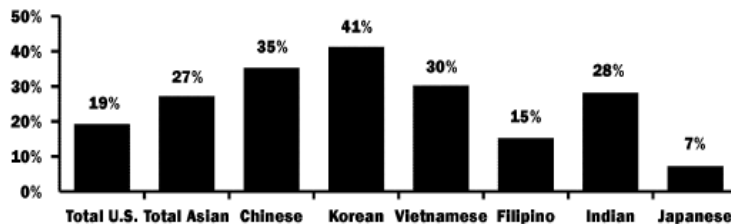
- **AA population is third significant minority in US.**  
2008, Total U.S population was 308 million. AA was 13.4 million (4.4% of the total US population).
- **AA population are growing fast.**  
2000, Total U.S population was 281.4 million, AA was 10,3 million.  
2005, Total U.S population was 296.4 million, AA was 12,7 million  
2050, AA expected to make up 9% of the total US population.

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## Importance

### Asian Americans Report Greater Difficulty in Communicating with Their Doctor

Percent of adults reporting one or more measures of poor communication\*



Base: Adults with a health care visit in the past two years.

\* Doctor didn't listen to everything, patient didn't understand fully, or patient had questions but didn't ask.

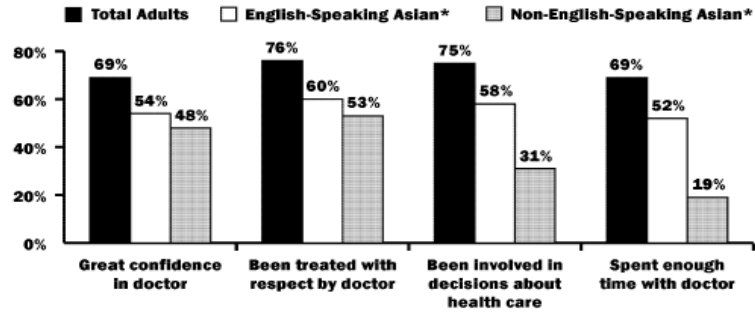
Source: The Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey.

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## Importance

### Asian Americans Less Likely to Report Positive Patient-Physician Interactions

Percent of adults reporting they had...



Base: Adults with a health care visit in the past two years.

\* As defined by language spoken at home.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey.

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## Importance

Asian American (AA) rate PCP performance lower than whites, African-American and Latinos.

Deborah A Taira and colleagues surveyed 502 patients from Boston, Mass showed:

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## Importance

**Table 2. Primary Care Performance and Overall Satisfaction Scores (on 100 point scales) by Ethnicity, Adjusted for Age, Gender, Education, Income, and Health Status**

Primary Care Scale and Overall Satisfaction	Caucasian	Asian	African-American	Latino(a)
Financial access	70 <sup>†</sup>	55*	67	60
Organizational access	67 <sup>†</sup>	58*	65	60
Visit-based continuity	80 <sup>†</sup>	65*	77	76
Longitudinal continuity	57	45	60	69
Communication	84 <sup>†</sup>	70*	82 <sup>†</sup>	84 <sup>†</sup>
Technical skill	82 <sup>†</sup>	73*	81	82
Contextual knowledge of patient	70 <sup>†</sup>	61*	65*	71
Comprehensive scope of care	37 <sup>†</sup>	28*	42	41
Interpersonal treatment	86 <sup>†</sup>	70*	82 <sup>†</sup>	84 <sup>†</sup>
Integration	78 <sup>†</sup>	61*	71*	76
Trust	77 <sup>†</sup>	63*	74 <sup>†</sup>	75
Overall satisfaction	72 <sup>†</sup>	65*	69	71

\* indicates significantly different from Caucasian at  $p \leq 0.01$ .

<sup>†</sup> indicates significantly different from Asian at  $p \leq 0.01$ .

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## Importance

Cultural beliefs and differences in health care create barriers in obtaining quality healthcare for both non Asian American and Asian American.

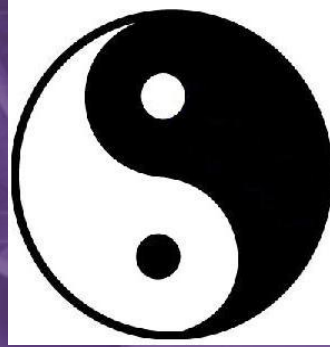
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## Cultural Health Beliefs

Health Practice: Traditional Chinese Medicine is rooted in Yin-Yang

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Yin



陽

Yang

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

example

- Giving birth causes a loss of yang, or heat, which must be restored.
- As a result yang is restored with eating yang food, rest, avoiding anything cold and any activity.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

### The family system

- The family functions as collective decision-maker. autonomy becomes collective rather than individual.
- The Chinese family feels a strong obligation to protect the patient from unnecessary stress or worry.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

### Example

- Family make decision for patient's cancer treatment plan.
- Family do not want to let patient know the diagnosis of cancer.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs



Qi

The energy around us and in us.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

Qi

Circulating life energy that creates the balance of negative and positive forms in the body is believed to be essential for good health

Blood is considered a non-renewable vital energy for the body and Qi.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

### Example

- The patients may resist to having lab tests that involves withdrawing blood or may resist donating blood.
- Patient also may request blood transfusion in the hopes of improving the Qi.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

### Ecchymosis

ecchymosis relieves congestion, thus allowing for the regulation of blood and energy.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

For Example

It is common for people to rub the skin with a object such as a coin to produce ecchymosis in order to relieve congestion and increase circulation.



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## Cultural Health Beliefs

Self Control

It is believed that an individual should demonstrate inner stamina and strengths to tolerate crisis and pain.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

example

- It is not unusual for the Asian patient to deny pain even if they are in excruciating pain.
- Report physical discomfort for mental problem

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

obey authority, respect knowledge, harmony

- we all hope for a good experience whether we are the healthcare providers or the patient.
- Education is the most priority in Asian Culture.

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## Cultural Health Beliefs

### Example

Disagreement against harmony and disrespect to other.

Do not make other lost face.

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## Challenges

- 83 year old Chinese woman, mentally alter, found to have a lung mass with question of lung cancer..
- Three family members feel disclosure is important but fear the emotional stress.
- Other members feel patient should not be told the truth.

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## Challenges

- **Patient:** A Chinese woman, after given birth, only willing to provider minimal care to her baby, refused to do daily care and to eat hospital food.
- **Healthcare provider:** The nurse though that patient had post-partum depression, may need to have PSY and social consult.
- **Consequences:** Patient upset. Nurse frustrated.

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## Challenge

- **Patient:** A Chinese student was transferred to MGH for LFT that was out of range.
- **Healthcare provider:** doctors ordered more testes and medical treatments.
- **Consequence:** Patient complained ineffective treatment. Cost increased by unnecessary tests.

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## Challenges

- **Patient:** A Cambodian woman presented to PCP for 3 days nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, she was found to have multiple ecchymosis on her back.

### Consequence

Confusion between provider and patient mis-diagnosis and even consequences for the family

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## Challenges

Communication Is not only language but also culture for the Chinese

A Chinese patient refused pain medication following surgery. Patient appears to be in pain yet says he is not in pain

### Consequence

Nurse confused with patient's body language showed pain level, but patient answer "No pain".

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NO Pa

## Suggestions

A System approach

Staying open.

Improving communication

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## Suggestions

A System approach structure is the key.

- Education, Committees, Seminars, organizational publications, train class/presentation.
- Encourage excellent cultural practice and share experiences
- Create Cultural consulting.
- Create Cultural quality of patient care managing.

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## Suggestions

### Improving personal interactions

#### 3 keys factors cross cultural communication

1. Language---vocabularies, pronunciations, formal/informal.
2. Attitude---do you willing to learn? To speak? To go out of comfort zone?
3. Knowledge---how much do you understand other cultures?

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## Suggestion

### Staying open and be willing to understand

- Communication
- Harmony
- Collective decision making

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## suggestion

- Staying open and be willing to understand
- Self-control
- Education
- Language

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## Summary

- AA is third significant group and growing fastest in U.S.
- AA rate PCP performance lower than other Ethnic.
- Close cultural gap will increase quality and safety healthcare
- Provide quality of healthcare via system structure approaching and individual improving.

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