Cultural Competence in Breastfeeding Promotion

Jay Moreland, M.D. IBCLC
Utah Breastfeeding Coalition
January 2009
j.moreland@m.cc.utah.edu
Objectives

Participants will be able to:

• Demonstrate basic cultural competency skills using the LEARN model
• List cultural issues with Maternal/Child Care for Hispanic and other populations
• Identify cultural barriers to lactation
• Understand cultural issues with a premature baby
Style of Lecture: Interactive

- I would like to encourage other’s perspectives
- Please raise hands and make comments or ask questions
- I like to hear what you do to understand people of other cultures
Each situation is UNIQUE:

Family

Language

And

Culture

Father

Mother

& Baby

Work

Society
Language: Cultural Glue
USA Minority Population 2005
(Compared to 296.4 Total population)
Utah Minority Population 2005
(Compared to 2.3 Million White People)
Trends for Exclusive Breastfeeding in NJ by Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic Population In the USA

• 2/3 Typically from Mexico
• Southwestern U.S., California, Texas, and Utah are also 2/3 or so Mexican immigrants
LEARN Model

- LEARN about your patient!

LEARN

- Listen
- Elicit
- Assess
- Recommend
- Negotiate
Listen actively with empathy and respect

- Identify yourself and greet the patient
- If you can greet in their language, do so!
- Do NOT assume their first language.
- Determine if there is a need for interpreter services
- Set the tone by asking open-ended questions and being patient
- Learn the Language of their Culture
Language and Healthcare

• A language acts as a filter through which its speakers interpret the world around them (Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956)

• This includes views about healthcare
• This is one very good reason to use a professional translator and not a 10 year old daughter.

• English Examples:
  • “The Terrible Twos”
  • “Midlife Crisis”
Words Are Powerful

• Realize that if a word exists in a culture,
• Then there is a commonly held belief

• For medically related words…
• That means a commonly held assumption or belief about health.
English Speaking Culture Can Be a Barrier

- Not much hierarchy
- Gender is less emphasized in our language
- Individual priority over group or family
- Alcohol is considered by most as a choice, but not a deadly sin
- Technology and science are revered
- Religion is separate from government
Spanish Words As a Model
Common Themes With Many Other Cultures

- **Familismo**  Importance of family at all levels: nuclear, extended, fictive kin (compadres). Needs of family take precedence over individual needs. Mutual reciprocity.
- **Personalismo** Display of mutual respect. Trust building.
- **Presentismo** Emphasis on present.
- **Espiritismo** Belief that good/evil spirits can affect well-being.
- **Embracilado** Belief that you can hold a baby too much
Language and Social Hierarchy
“Jerarquismo”

- Spanish word for respect for hierarchy
- Many world languages use different verb conjugation or other techniques to indicate the status of someone.
- This pattern of hierarchy is less dominant in the English language.
- Saying “sir” or “mam” is one way to do it in English
- This is frequently unrecognized by Americans
- This can be one of the difficulties Americans have in cross-cultural situations.

- Ask yourself: “who in this situation is the senior person?”
What Other Common Themes?

• Please raise your hand if you
• Can give voice to a different cultural concept from the dominant “American culture”
• Speak another language and can teach us a few cultural tips or concepts
• Recognize a cultural theme that we need to recognize
You are Liable for Translation

- Inadequate interpretation is a form of discrimination according to:
  - The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
    - Medicare and Medicaid!
  - Office for Civil Rights
  - There have been cases prosecuted here in the State of Utah
Free Interpretation Services

• The provider is responsible to arrange for an interpreter
• Available to clients in
  • Medicaid,
  • Primary Care Network
  • Children's Health Insurance Programs
• Utah Medicaid: 1-800-662-9651
Elicit the health beliefs of the patient

- As they relate to the reason for the visit as well as the patient's health behaviors.

  - "What worries you the most?"
  - “What advice have you gotten from others?"
  - "What do you think has caused the problem and what do you think started it?"
  - "How can I be of most help to you?"
  - “What are some of the things people usually do where you are from?”
Medical Culture Can Be A Barrier

- Pregnancy is an illness.
- A new mother is a sick patient.
- A newborn is a sick patient.
- Breastfeeding is not to be trusted.
- These events are viewed as needing medical intervention rather than as normative family experiences.
  - (Conrad & Kern, 1986; Ehrenreich & English, 1973)
Reasons for Weaning in Mexico

- Doctor’s advice (68%)
- “Not enough milk” (62%) (No tengo)
- “Bad milk” (56%)
- “Susto” (54%)
- Illness of the mother (56%) or child (43%)
- “Coraje” (52%)

Other Ethnic Groups

- **SE Asians**
  - If you bottle feed, you are rich
  - Colostrum is bad

- **Pacific Islanders**
  - Bigger baby is better; formula is extra
  - Adoption of baby by other family members
  - (I will breastfeed if it is a boy, if it is a girl…)

- **African Americans**
  - Grandma didn’t breastfeed: no experience
  - Influence of friends more than husbands
Teen/Youth “Culture”

- Per Erik Erikson
- Psychosocial Crisis:
  - Identity vs. Role Confusion
  - They want to “fit in”
- Breasts are…
  - Relatively new development
  - For piercing or tattooing
  - Sexual
  - Embarrassing
  - For showing off
Alcohol Sensitivity

- Elixers contain alcohol
- Some food is cooked with alcohol
- Some cultures consider it a sin to drink alcohol
- Many consider medicinal alcohol OK
- Not all non-alcohol drinkers know or care about this
Vegetarian Sensitivity

- Some “vegetarian food” has been made with animal products!
- Some cultures consider it a SIN to eat animal products!
- Gelatin is an animal product
- Gelatin is contained in some capsules
- Gelatin is contained in some gel caps
- Not all vegetarians know or care about this
Kosher and Halāl Sensitivity

- Kosher diet for some Jews
  - Special blessing procedures for meat
  - Certain food items can’t be mixed
  - Pork is forbidden
- Halāl diet for some Muslims
- Halāl diet also forbids pork
- Muslims may sometimes eat Kosher
- Some Gelatin is made with Pig gelatin
- Some gelcaps/capsules are bad??!??!!
Lesbian/Gay Sensitivity:
Caregiver attitudes can create barriers

- Hostility
- Demeaning jokes or comments
- Anxiety
- Excessive curiosity
- Breached confidentiality
- Mental health referrals

LEADS to:
- delay in seeking care
- Or NO medical care.
Assess Patient priorities, values, and supports

"I'd like to get to know you more today. Could you tell me about yourself?"
“Where are you from?”

• "With whom do you live? Where do you work?"
• "What brought you to this country? How does medical care differ here?"
• "Do you have family and friends that help you with decisions or give you advice?"
• "Do you have any trouble reading medicine bottles or appointment cards?"
• "Is transportation a problem for you?"
Influence of Education level on breastfeeding 1998 WIC data
Literacy Quick Evaluation

- In Mexico, cursive and signatures are taught in about the 3rd or 4th grade
- Look at the Consent line or signature
- If there is an “X” or initials.....illiterate?
- If there is a printed name in block letters.....less than 4th grade capable?
- If there is a nice fancy signature...literate to the level of reading our handouts?
- Ask about their literacy level!
- Ask what their profession was in their country!
Socioeconomic Influence on breastfeeding

- **In the USA:** Initiation rates were higher in the highest socioeconomic class (87%)
- Rates are lowest in the lowest socioeconomic class (43%)
- **In Developing Countries:** Rural women and poor women are more likely to breastfeed.
Third World Trends:
Initiation rates within a single country
Developed Nation Trend:
Initiation rates within a single country
Telling Time

- There is a new generation coming to us!
- Some of them grew up with ONLY DIGITAL clocks!
- They may not be able to read a sweep hand clock!
- So when you ask them to fill out the feeding log....
- Ask them if they would prefer you to set the VCR clock so they can use that
  - (Also easier to read at night)
Recommend a plan of action

• With adequate explanation and understanding
• Use language the patient can easily understand (avoid jargon)
• Try using few if any multi-syllable words!
• Be guided by the patient about how much information to provide.
• Check to make sure patient has understood by asking him/her to paraphrase. For example: "To be sure that we understand each other, would you please tell me what I just explained to you?"
Ad Council PSA Advice:
Better to describe risks

Example: This is your brain on Drugs

vs Your brain is healthier without drugs
Formula vs Breastfeeding
(Increased Relative Risk of Illness in parenthesis)

- Allergies, Eczema (2-7x)
- Urinary Tract Infections (2.6-5.5x)
- Inflammatory bowel disease (1.5-1.9x)
- Diabetes Type I (2.4x)
- Gastroenteritis (3x)
- Hodgkin’s Lymphoma (1.8-6.7x)
- Otitis Media (2.4x)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* Meningitis (3.8x)
- Necrotizing Enterocolitis (6-10x)
- Pneumonia/ Lower Respiratory Infection (1.7-5x)
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (3.9x)
- Sepsis (2.1x)
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (2.0x)
- Developed World Hospitalization (3x)
- Developing country Morbidity (50x)
- Developing country Mortality (7.9x)

Exclusive breastfeeding has much more medical benefit

(Actual drop depends on medical illness considered)
Ad Council PSA Advice:
Better to describe risks of formula

**Formula Feeding Risk:**

3x Higher Risk of Illness than Breastfeeding
Simplify: Belly Balls
Educate on Normal
Using Simple Language

- Some babies refuse the breast if you give the bottle early
- Colostrum is 10x more powerful in defenses than mom’s blood
- Baby needs to eat 8-12x/24 hrs or more
- Normal for baby to lose weight at first
Negotiate by involving the patient in next steps and decisions

- "Now that we understand each other, let's come up with a plan that works for you."
- "What do you think should be the next steps?"
Pedagogic teaching:

• In pedagogic teaching the students are supposed to learn what they’re told.
• This lecture is mostly pedagogic!
• They do not decide what they need to learn.
• This works better in primary education and not so well in adult education.
• This type of learning model does NOT do well in cross-cultural teaching situations.
Andragogic teaching:

- Adult students learn better if:
  - they know WHY they need to know something,
  - the process is self-directed,
  - their own experiences are brought into the learning,
  - the subject is relevant to their life,
  - and they are motivated internally.

- This works better cross-culturally!

LEARN

- Listen
- Elicit
- Assess
- Recommend
- Negotiate
Maria: Learning from Her
Listen actively with empathy and respect

- Maria
- G2 P1001
- Delivered baby girl @ 34 weeks by C/S
- She thinks she delivered early because her husband was deported recently: Susto
- Worried about the health of her baby
- “No tengo leche”
- Last baby: “No quieria mi leche”
Elicit the health beliefs of the patient

- The “Susto” made her go into labor
- She is worried that it also made her milk bad
- Besides that she doesn’t have any milk
- Besides that the baby is too small to eat well at the breast
- She tells you that her family did make recommendations for "la Cuarentena"
Cuarentena

- 40 days post-partum
- Pelvic rest
- Keep mom and baby warm
  - (think velour blankets!)
- Warm food and drink for mom
- Don’t go out with baby in public
- Family support provided
- No bathing (rarely)
And Jehovah spake unto Moses, ..... If a woman conceive seed, and bear a man-child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of the impurity of her sickness shall she be unclean. .......
And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she bear a maid-child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her impurity; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.
30 to 40 Day Postpartum

- Chinese (Zhuo yue zi) “sit month”
- Vietnamese (just “the 30 days”)
- Muslim (Arabic=“Nifas”)
- South Asian (Pakistan, India)
- European (Spanish= “Cuarentena”)
- Bosnian (“Babine”)
Embracilado

- Mom won’t touch the baby much
  - Doesn’t hold baby for very long
- You ask her why
- She says that she is worried the baby will become “Embracilado”
- What is this?
Assess Patient priorities, values, and supports

- Maria is from Mexico City
- She is barely literate
- She wants to return to work after 6 weeks
- She wants to make sure the baby will take a bottle so she can work
- She wants her baby to be “gordita”
- Her mother-in-law will watch the baby and says the baby has to start the bottle now
- She works as a hotel maid from 4 to 6 hours a day
Mexican immigrants are at great risk for weaning.

- Mexican women do well with breastfeeding once they get home?
- In fact, inner-city Mexican women in Guadalajara were shown to have a median time to weaning of 39 days!
Usted

• The translator mentions that she speaks to her mother-in-law with “Usted”

• She really thinks Maria would listen to her mother-in-law
Assessment:

- Her husband was recently deported
- Grandma is saying the baby is not getting enough
- Grandma says giving both gives the benefits of both
Recommend

• Influence who you can...
• Whoever is with the patient is likely to have influence on her decision making
• This is especially true in other cultures
• Make sure grandma hears your spiel
Recommend a plan of action

- With adequate explanation and understanding
- Use **language** the patient can easily understand (avoid jargon)
- Be guided by the patient about how much information to provide.
- Check to make sure patient has understood by asking him/her to paraphrase. For example: "To be sure that we understand each other, would you please tell me what I just explained to you?"
What/How do you recommend?

• Song and Dance....
• Cheerleading...
• Broken record...

• How do you balance advocacy
• with the truth?
• It is a delicate balancing act
Recommendations for Maria

- Exclusive breastfeeding is best for baby
- Emotions can effect let-down, but NOT quality of milk
- Premie baby not be ready to feed at breast fully
- Explain NG Tube and gradual feed advance
- Pumping is main job for mom right now
- Exclusive breastfeeding goal until breastfeeding established
Educate on Kangaroo Care

- Holding a baby gets it home faster!
- Holding the baby gets mom antibodies against the infections in the NICU!
- Then the breastmilk gives the defenses
- Holding the baby helps it grow faster
- Some of the important studies were done in Latin America! (Latin Pride!)
Negotiate by involving the patient in next steps and decisions

- "Now that we understand each other, let's come up with a plan that works for you."
- "What do you think should be the next steps?"
“La Cuarentena del Bebé”
(Culturally Sensitive & Baby Friendly)

• “La Cuarentena del Bebé” is presented as the 40 days when mothers should exclusively breastfeed

• Avoid bottles, pacifiers, and supplementation.

• Mothers are encouraged to breastfeed exclusively for six months if possible.

• One year or more goal for total
Getting the Baby to Take a Bottle

- Start AFTER the Cuarentena
- Give one bottle every other day
- Have the Mother-in-Law give it, or Dad
- Use mom’s milk
Return to Work Plan

- What does she know about pumping?
- Does she have the right situation?
  - Place to pump
  - Place to store
  - Support from employer
- Does she know how to store the milk?
This is not just giving advice

- Find out what her situation is
- Based on best practices
  - Help her problem solve
  - Give options and ideas
Negotiation: Maria Agrees to Try

- Maria agrees that at least during the Cuarentena she could breastfeed exclusively.
- Grandma loves the idea of Kangaroo Care!
  - “When I was a mom, we used rebosos”
- She is not too sure about the pump: it seems expensive.
- There are plenty of hotel rooms to pump in.
- You tell her about the free pumps at WIC and/or tell her where to rent.
Grandma Supports You Too

• She says that when she had her kids, they didn’t know anything about how good breastmilk was for babies, so they gave formula instead.

• She is proud that her daughter-in-law is giving the very best protection for her precious grandchild.
LEARN

• Listen
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Center For Multicultural Health

• www.health.utah.gov/cmh
• E-mail: cmh@utah.gov
• Phone: 1-888-222-2542
• Eliminating Health Disparities Among Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the United States

• Chapter 4: Language barriers and access to care, by SeonAe Yeo

• Joyce J Fitzpatrick, Antonia M Villarruel, Cornelia P Porter

• Springer Publishing Company, 2004
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Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine
October 2008
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