



2016

CROSS-CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS: THE ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Learning Objectives

1. Understanding the different challenges Asians face with chronic kidney disease.
2. Appreciating the special needs of Asian kidney patients and what they require in terms of education and support.

LIVE POLLING QUESTION #1

Which of the following communities are not considered to be a high risk group for kidney disease?

- a. Asians
- b. South Asians
- c. Aboriginals
- d. African Caribbean
- e. Hispanic
- f. Caucasian

Basic Facts

1. One out of 10 Canadians have kidney disease.
2. Aboriginal, Asian, South Asian, African Caribbean and Hispanic communities are high risk groups for having kidney disease as they have higher rates of diabetes and blood pressure— the two biggest risk factors for kidney disease

Global Facts

- 60% of diabetics in the world live in Asia.¹
- 113.9 million adults have diabetes in China, 11.6% of the adult population.²

¹ Hu FB. [Globalization of diabetes: The role of diet, lifestyle, and genes](#). *Diabetes Care*. 2011;34(6):1249-1257.

² Xu Y, Wang L, He J, et al. [Prevalence and control of diabetes in Chinese adults](#). *JAMA*. 2013;310(9):948-59.

Global Facts

- By 2030, without intervention, both China and India combined will have almost half a billion diabetics.
 - ❖ Diabetes is a growing problem among Asian Americans.
 - According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the risk of diabetes is 18% higher among Asian Americans than white Americans.
 - In the U.S. diabetes is the leading cause of kidney disease and kidney failure.³

³ National Kidney Foundation in U.S. 2015

Global Facts

So, in terms of prevention of kidney disease in Asians, it is crucial to also address preventing diabetes in Asians.

- Diet and exercise are so important in the prevention of diabetes and kidney disease.

Cultural Considerations for Asian CKD Patients at Different Stages

Diet

Food is such an integral part of Asian culture: every special life event involves celebrating with food and Asians are passionate about eating!

- Dietitians and professionals speaking to Asian CKD patients about their diet need to focus on **Asian** foods so patients can relate to the foods they are actually consuming and make healthy changes accordingly
- Patients need practical advice which they can easily implement in their Asian grocery shopping and to their Asian style of cooking.

Cultural Considerations for Asian CKD Patients at Different Stages

Exercise

Encouraging a healthy lifestyle of routine exercise is necessary for Asian CKD patients. Traditional Asian exercises like Tai Chi or Zhi Gong may be perfect for older patients.

Social Attitudes / Cultural Beliefs

- A. “Saving Face” In Chinese culture to “save face” is to retain respect and avoid humiliation at all costs. Wikipedia defines it as “taking action to ensure that one is not thought badly of by his or her peers”.
- Understanding this very prevalent social belief explains how Chinese CKD patients may be ashamed of their diagnosis and not want others to even know of their medical diagnosis, let alone to ask for help.

Social Attitudes / Cultural Beliefs

- B. “Do Not Wash Your Dirty Linen In Public” When something disgraceful happens that could be harmful to the family name or the family, Chinese people would rather repress their feelings inwardly than speak out, for fear that if others knew, they would lose face, and be ridiculed.
- This absolute concern about outward appearances can be taken to extremes. In this context, a Chinese CKD patient may feel disgraced that he has CKD and afraid and distressed that he will bring shame to his family.

LIVE POLLING QUESTION #2

What is a common belief in Asian culture about organ donation?

- a. Living female kidney donors won't be able to get pregnant after they donate their kidney
- b. After you die, the "whole body" needs to be intact to go to heaven.
- c. It is invasive and almost "rude" to have organs removed from a body after death
- d. Buddhists believe that a person who died can only have a second life if that person had done good things and died in one piece.
- e. All of the above

Asian Beliefs About Organ Donation

- The idea of “wholeness of self” as a deterrent for kidney donation

How Do We Address Asian Cultural Beliefs and Overcome Concerns About Kidney Disease and Organ Donation?

EDUCATE! EDUCATE! EDUCATE! But educate in an efficient, culturally-sensitive manner to foster learning and change in attitudes and behavior.

WHAT TO DO?

- educate both the old and young
- engage Asian politicians, cultural leaders, and celebrities to promote kidney awareness and organ donation
- have educational materials, webinars, workshops in Asian languages
- encourage family conversations about organ donation
- emphasize the goodness of organ donation

WHAT TO DO?

- have support people who speak Asian languages to assist CKD patients one on one (group settings may not be as comfortable because of the “saving face” notion) as they are likely to be more open and honest in an one to one setting
- organize social activities conducted in Asian languages to foster interaction amongst Asian CKD patients and their families

To summarize,

CULTURAL BELIEFS CAN CHANGE NOT ONLY FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE OTHER, BUT WITH APPROPRIATE EDUCATION, GUIDANCE, AND SUPPORT, CAN CHANGE WITHIN GENERATIONS