

# Cuban heritage

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Cuban Heritage Cuban Heritage Understanding the Cuban culture and habits in respect of communication would be highly important in helping Mrs. Hernandez. Successful communication with Mrs. Hernandez would similarly serve as a case study for similar future encounters and help medical practitioners launch effective health communication initiatives for that particular audience. In this encounter, I would consider a public-relation form of approach. Custom publications have proven to be an effective way to communicate and get through to Cubans. For example, Procter & Gamble has invested large amounts of money in order to enhance their relationships with the Latino population through customized publications in their native Spanish language. This initiative has proven to be successful (Double base Media mark Research & Intelligence, 2007). In a similar approach, I would, to the best of my ability address Mrs. Hernandez in her native language, which would subconsciously make her feel more accommodating and well taken care of.

Having gained her trust, the next step would be to get her on a diet with regular exercise. First, the main cause of increased weight is unsaturated fat in the meals we eat. Therefore, I would advice Mrs. Hernandez to adopt unsaturated fats and do away with saturated and trans fat in her cooking. Unsaturated fat is inclusive of omega-3 fatty acids. Adopting unsaturated fats will serve to reduce the number of calories Mrs. Hernandez takes in and also reduce her serum low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol. In terms of exercise, it is clear that Mrs. Hernandez stays at home most of the time, and it is likely that the number of hours spent of television and lazing around has contributed to her condition. I would, therefore, recommend a one hour

walks every day to be sufficient exercise considering her age.

Cuban folk medicine is mainly herbal. I would, however, advise Mrs. Hernandez not to opt for that alternative and instead take the oral hypoglycemic agent prescribed by the doctor. To convince her towards this end, I would ensure that she understands that I respect and admire her culture and that I am in no way trying to undermine it. Cubans generally subscribe to the values of *marianismo* and *machismo*, which makes them more reluctant to consult doctors on health issues. They, however, also look to the community for opinions, and at this juncture I would use her daughter, Mariana, who has already assimilated to convince her of my noble intent in offering her the medicine.

Traditional doctors in Cuba have used plants and herbs throughout Cuba's history to cure ailments and diseases. These remedies were inherited from one generation to the other and consist of over 170 plant species. Traditional herbal medicine dominates the healthcare sector in Cuba to date, including pharmacies and doctors. Examples of folk remedies from Cuba are; using the common oregano to cure coughs, which is under research by scientists. The traditional doctors also use *Ocimum sanctum* to treat diabetes. They also treat cancer and other immune deficiency ailments with the 'nonni' fruit or the *Morinda citrifolia*. In addition, the *Hibiscus sabdarifa* is believed to cure numerous health issues inclusive of stomach ailments and high blood pressure. Externally applying a hot Chile pepper on the throat after having soaked the pepper pods in water relieves laryngitis and a sore throat. Finally, it is believed that eating red Chile peppers or taking pills made from a combination of honey and powdered Chile cures hemorrhoids.

## Resources

Double base Media mark Research & Intelligence (2007). Hispanic/Latino Market Profile. New York: Magazine Publishers of America.