

# Cultural influences on a child's health

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Topic: Cultural Influences on a Child's Health

Cultural identity of a country plays a very significant role in the health and development of a child. For instance, US being a super power nation, possesses a dynamic culture and this certainly reflects in the health and behavior of its young population. But if an Indian, Chinese, Mexican or European child are to be compared with their American counterpart, a wide variance in their life and health status can be observed. However, being a citizen of a developed nation does not imply that they are in their best of health. According to Austin (2010) "Health and well-being in children and young people is not easy to qualify or quantify; how the concept translates linguistically and culturally is a moot point".

Family roles : No one is more dedicated in contributing to a child's health and welfare than his own immediate family members. It can be seen that, the families of South Eastern countries like China and India take extreme care in bringing up their child healthily and prosperously. But with regard to American children, they depend more on medical experts and health centers for their health and medical needs. US being a developed and advanced nation have all the latest technology and medical care system, but unfortunately does not giving proper care and nurturing to the children when they need it the most.

Illness and health beliefs : Every country has its own ancient beliefs and customs, when it comes to their child's health and welfare For example, it is widely known fact that Chinese practice a holistic approach, when it comes to health and well-being of their child. As per Garnecki (2007) "In Chinese culture during post partum, the mother and baby are supposed to remain home-bound to prevent against death and disease". On the contrary, an American women give least importance to their child's health in post and pre

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-delivery stage. Even many European countries have their own traditional means for protecting the children from malignant diseases and illnesses. However, such things can sound hilarious to an American family, but are followed respectfully by couples in South Asian, Mexican and European countries even today. Symptom management when acutely ill or chronically ill The aim of symptom management is to treat the child in advance stages of an illness. In countries like India, China and Mexico, the people reach out for homely remedies to resist the illness found among children. Since these countries are not completely sophisticated, their access to ultra modern medical technologies is minimal and stick to their own traditional practices to ward off child illnesses. On the contrary, America being a most advanced country has full-fledged symptom management system to provide maximum care and attention to a diseased child. Birth and death rituals According to Raman (2006) "Rituals and ceremonies that mark a child's birth and survival are common worldwide. In the United States, baptism and male circumcision are two of the more familiar baby traditions, but there are many others that are less visible". Whereas, in India and China, birth ceremonies are an extravagant event, where in all the family members get involved in wishing prosperity and health to the new-born child. However, among Europeans birth rituals are less common and so is the case with death rituals.

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