

Cultural Cues and Communicating With Your Chinese Patient

Center for Asian Equity and Professional Development (CAEPD) | Office of Patient Experience

This serves as a general guide, recognizing individual differences within each culture, aimed at facilitating optimal care.



Traditional Remedies and Western Health Care

Your patient may prefer:

- To use traditional Chinese remedies as an initial approach for healing, especially during early stages of illness.
- To drink mainly hot liquids (water or tea) when sick or postpartum.
- To try traditional approaches first, and will seek Western medical care later.



Understanding Relationships

- Chinese culture emphasizes loyalty to family and devotion to traditions and puts less emphasis on individual feelings.
- Assess your patient's kinship relationships and determine which family members are most influential in decision-making.
- Family members may shield a patient from hearing bad medical news out of concern this will worsen the patient's condition.
- Ask your patient whom they would like to include in medical decisions.



Chinese Culture's Norms

- Be aware of the usage of the number 4, as it phonetically sounds like "death" in the native tongue.
- Your patient may highly value emotional self-control, appearing stoic.
- Be aware that your patient may not show pain or ask for pain medication.
- Instead of asking your patient about pain ask, "May I get you something for pain?"

Chinese patients may speak different dialects. For optimal care, please identify the patient's preferred language for communication and provide an interpreter.

CAEPD is creating positive change in the advancement of professional development and equity through promoting education, enabling candid conversations, and taking tangible action.

For more information, or to get involved, please email us: CAEPD.Core@mountsinai.org



We Stand Together Against Racism and Bias.

种族主义 – 我们守望相助并反对种族主义和偏见
인종 차별 주의 - 우리는 인종 차별과 편견에 맞서 함께 싸웁니다
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