

Asian American and Their Culture

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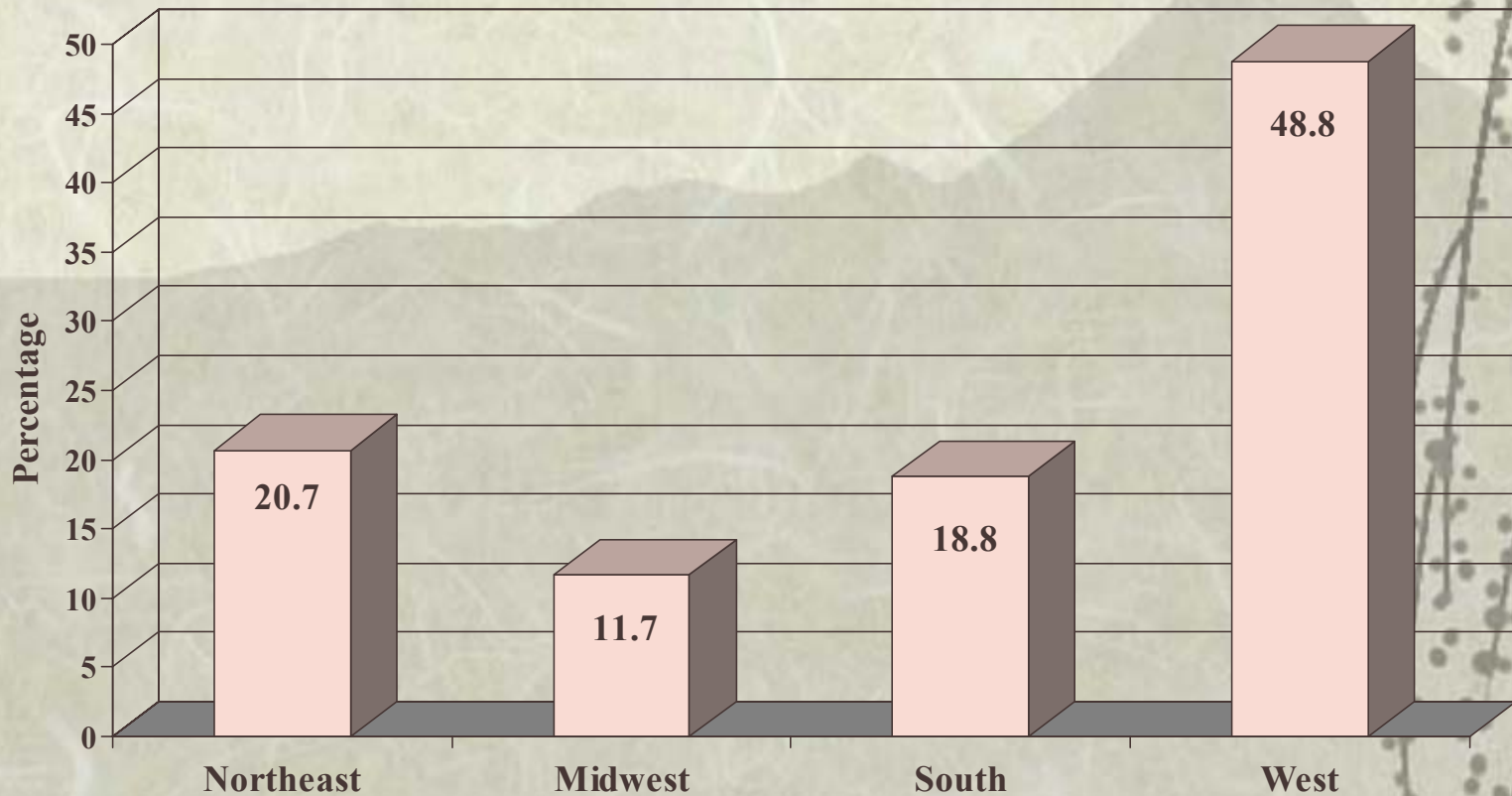
Overview of the Presentation

- ❖ Demographic Characteristics
- ❖ Immigrant History
- ❖ Culture Impact on Health Seeking Behaviors
- ❖ Tips and Suggestions

Definition of Asian American

- ❖ Asian American refers to those individuals who are living in the United States and having origins of in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ By 2000, there were 3.6% of the US population, approximately 10 million, were Asian American.
- ❖ Asian American, a fast growing minority (12.5%) in the U.S. next to Hispanic/Latino (13%)* from April, 2000 to June 2003.

Geographic Distribution of Asian American



- ❖ The greatest concentrated areas are California (4.2 million), New York (1.2 Million) and Hawaii (.7 million), a total of over 50% of Asian American.

Myth of Model Minority

❖ **Stereotype**

- ALL ASIAN ARE THE SAME

- HAS NO PROBLEM with High Resilience

Diversity of Asian American

- ❖ Asian American are very diverse:
 - Countries of origin & Ethnicities
 - Languages/dialects
 - Immigration History
 - Length/Generation of being in the United States
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Religious
 - Acculturation

Origins of Asian American

- ❖ 51% of Asian American are immigrants
- ❖ The six largest groups, account for 89% of Asian American:
 - Chinese (2.7 million),
 - Filipinos (2.4 million),
 - Asian Indian (1.9 million)
 - Korean (1.23 million)
 - Vietnamese (1.22 million)
 - Japanese (1.15million)

Immigrant History

- ❖ As 51% of Asian American are immigrants
- ❖ Reasons include:
 - for most of Chinese, Indians, Japanese, Filipinos and Koreans, arrive as middle-class immigrants to
 - join their families
 - invest in the U.S. economy
 - those of Southeast Asian origins, such as Vietnamese, Cambodian, or Laotians
 - escape war and persecution as refugees

Immigrant History

- ❖ 1880s – Chinese from Mainland China as railroad workers and ended by Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 till civil right movement in 1950s. Then, most immigrants were from Taiwan till 1970s. Again, iron-gate open in China.
- ❖ Japanese immigrant to US to replace Chinese immigrants after 1882. Till 1924 immigration act banned Japanese immigrant. 1942 the Executive Order 9066 sent Japanese to concentration camp after Japanese attacked Honolulu.

Immigrant History

- ❖ Filipino – once being a American territory from 12/12/1898 to 7/4/1946, Philippines follow American model of life and English speaking county. Filipino American have little language problem.
- ❖ Most Korean immigrant arrived US after 1965 immigration reform

Immigrant History

- ❖ Vietnamese American – most wife and children of American serviceman before end of Vietnam war in 1975. 125,000 Vietnamese left their country in Spring 1975. They are highly educated and skilled people. Second wave began between 1978 and 1980s, mostly to escape from reeducation after communist government and they are less educated and skilled. Most of them speak Vietnamese at home.

Facts about Asian American

	Asian American	U.S. Overall
Age < 50 yrs old	80.7%	72%
Personal Income	\$20,719	\$21,587 (\$23,635 White)
Family Income	\$57,874	\$50,046
Living in Poverty	12.6%*	12.4% (7% White)

* Various rates based on county of origin as 7.0% in Filipino to 38.3% Hmong are living in poverty.

Facts about Asian American

	Asian American	U.S. Overall
No Formal Schooling	5.8%	0.6%
College or Higher Education	26.4%	28.8%
Professional/Management position	43.2%	33.6%

Facts about Asian American

Health Insurance

- 20-35% have no health insurance
- 6-20% on public insurance, such as Medicaid or Medicare
- 50-76% on private insurance

Facts about Asian American

- ❖ Hard work
- ❖ Family solidarity
- ❖ Discipline
- ❖ Non-confrontation
- ❖ Highly value education

Asian American Culture

❖ Heterogeneous

Religious – Buddhism, Hinduism
Muslim, Catholicism,
Christian, Daoism and
many others.

Language – different dialects even
within one country or one
region.

World View

- ❖ Defined as

The way people perceive their relationship to nature, institutions, and other people and objects (Kearney, 1984)

Shared Common World View

Holistic World View

Sensitive to Surrounding Environment

**Strive to Maintain Harmony and
Equilibrium**

Differences from Western Culture

- ❖ Western focus on self-expression through language while eastern culture focus on affect and non-verbal expression - 察言觀色 (cha yein koun sèr)
- ❖ ‘Language may not accommodate all that individual think and feel’ – Asian Culture.

Family Focus

- ❖ Focus Less on 'Individual' Compared to Western Culture
- ❖ Family Oriented/Focus as a whole even the extend family (光宗耀祖 – Koung Chong Yiàu Chû) – One person's behavior or achievement reflects on the entire family
- ❖ Helping each other within the family

- ❖ Strong and high respect on authority figures based on:

Age

Higher generation within extended family members

Social Class

- ❖ To have good “gene” – such as mental illness is seen as having bad gene and highly stigmatized for individuals and their families.

Parental Roles

- ❖ Father is the person who makes money and feed the family. His focus is work outside of the family.
- ❖ Mother is the person in charge of things within the family, including all issue related to house work, raising children and education, taking care of elders, etc.

Children

- ❖ Children are expected to focus on getting high achievement and performance in all aspects and to be competitive.
- Stress from “Model Minority”?????

Maintain Harmony

- ❖ Emphasize on harmonic social relationship
- ❖ Avoid any conflict
- ❖ Promote positive behaviors that foster harmony and agreeable situations.

Acculturation

- ❖ First generation of earlier immigrants tend to keep traditional culture.
- ❖ Lost of traditional culture in the later generations, especially for those native born Asian Americans.
- ❖ Culture conflict between generations.

Clinical Implications

- ❖ Be aware of non-verbal cues as Asian American are very sensitive to non-verbal communication, such as lack of eye contact imply not being respectful and not paying attention or not care about.
- ❖ Be open mind
- ❖ Be aware of differences among different Asian American's ethnicities
- ❖ Avoid stereotype
- ❖ Use title instead of direct name call

Clinical Implications

- ❖ Closely work with family member, especially the family representative identified by the family due to language barriers or culture differences.
- ❖ Clear explain problem and treatment alternatives but be ready to have a recommendation.
- ❖ Make sure patient and family members understand what you try to communicate as they may nod their head even they are not sure what you have said to them to just pay their respect to you.