

Jewish Orthodox

Cultural Competence Generalities

This is general information designed to provide information about common traditions, traits and experiences of a group. This information is not intended to nor should it be used to stereotype an individual. Personal experiences will vary. It is always best to ask.

Remember the “Platinum Rule”- treat others as they want to be treated

Overview: Orthodox refers to Jews who adhere to the classical, Torah traditions of the Jewish people. The Sherman Park neighborhood where St. Joseph is located is home to a population of Orthodox Jews.

Religion and Spirituality

Daily prayers

Men: three times per day

- Morning, Afternoon and Evening

Be sensitive to the need for time for prayer, in particular for men in the morning

Men have special prayer accessories worn during morning prayers (see other side)

Women: one to two times per day

- Morning and some women pray in the afternoon

Family

May have a large family with mothers and grandmothers in charge of the family and home

Family may bring in food

Gender Roles

Observe traditionally defined male/female roles

Physical contact between genders

- Prohibited except for very close family, e.g. spouses or parents & children or grandchildren
- Do not initiate handshake with the other gender
- Where possible have same-sex care providers for patients

Personal Appearance (see other side for examples)

Modest Dress (Women)

- Women wear only dresses or skirts
- Covering certain parts of body
- Women's clothing covers the elbows and knees and has high neckline

Covering Hair

- Married or previously married women cover their hair using either head covering or wig

Modest Dress (Men)

May wear a yarmulke (skull cap), have payos (long side curls) and a long beard

Dietary Norms

Kosher Food diet

- No milk and meat cooked, served or eaten together
- Kosher utensils must be used for preparation, serving and eating, especially when heated
- **Animal species *not* eaten:** pig, shellfish, certain fowl and insects
- **Animal species eaten:** Only mammals with cloven hooves and which chew their cud may be eaten, e.g. cows, buffalo, oxen, sheep, goats or deer

Tips when serving kosher food ordered

Always leave food in its commercial wrappers

- Allows patient see how it is prepared
- Allows patient to verify that food was properly wrapped while in a non-kosher warming device

Kosher food symbols



Religious Holiday Dietary Observances

Passover

Only unleavened bread known as *matzah* may be eaten, and any type of food with leavening is prohibited

Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av:

- Fast Days – refrain from all eating and drinking (even water) for approximately 25 hours, unless there are health issues that keep the person from participating in the fast

Language & Communication

English, may speak Hebrew or Yiddish

- Communication style described as warm, passionate and outgoing with a sharp sense of humor.
- Language that is frank and direct is appreciated with time for questions
- Appreciate respect and hospitality before “getting down to business”

Concept of Health

Mode of Healthcare – Health Promotion/Disease Prevention

Population overall participates in preventative care and take an active role in their care (HM)

Highest Jewish law is that you must do everything you can to save a life (JCR)

Illness Related Issues – Barriers to Healthcare/Health Disparities

Most value Western medical care and will access it if financial and geographic barriers don't exist (HM)

Some common beliefs include:

Labor, Birth & After Care

Husband:

- Often but not always present
- When present, husband will neither watch actual birth nor touch his wife after labor has reached a certain point

The laboring mother

- the mother may bring another woman to help with her personal and physical needs during childbirth

Pain Expression

May be more concerned with meaning of pain than pain itself (JCR)

End of Life: Death, Dying & Bereavement

- Avoid that which robs hope - phrasing information is important
- Rabbinical leader may be consulted for end of life concerns or wishes or if there is a change in treatment (HM)

Care of the Deceased: Best for family to do whenever feasible or able to do so → wonderful whenever staff can help facilitate family's involvement

- Autopsies avoided whenever possible
- Another Jew is present constantly to accompany and guard the body
- Cap IVs and leave in place so that blood and fluids are buried
- Preserve body parts for burial
- Do not typically donate organs

May be emotionally expressive at loved one's passing

Treatment Issues

Sabbath Day resources: begins sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday - Laws of saving a life override the Sabbath

Some observances: do not touch money, write, or use electrical appliances or drive a car or use the telephone. A non-Jewish person may operate these controls for the patient

Bells to ring instead of pressing call button

Battery operated & electric candles (available through Spiritual Services) for staff member to turn on before sundown

Arrangement with Registration and Pharmacy so patients don't have to sign forms on the Sabbath

Open electric doors for patient to access hospital on Sabbath