

LEARN HOW CULTURAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES INFLUENCE HEALTHCARE DELIVERY

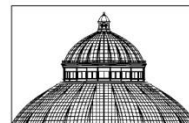
CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN MEDICINE

1. Represents a set of knowledge, beliefs and skills that promote cross-cultural respect, trust, and increased disclosure between physicians and patients from diverse cultures.
2. Has the intention to improve the doctor-patient relationship and health care delivery, particularly to underserved populations.

TRAINING OFFERED BY THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC BOTANY

Brings a unique multidisciplinary approach to developing an important set of skills as part of the curriculum in medical schools.

Our training combines information sessions and practical exercises related to traditional medical practices of different Latino communities, including their use of medicinal plants and cultural beliefs about health conditions, with the goal of training health care providers to improve interaction with their patients in the clinical encounter.



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**MEDICAL CULTURAL
COMPETENCY TRAINING**

**IN LATINO AND
CARIBBEAN
ETHNOMEDICAL SYSTEMS**

*Offered by The New York
Botanical Garden*



OVERVIEW OF TRAINING

INFORMATION SESSIONS ON DOMINICAN ETHNOMEDICINE IN NEW YORK CITY

Why do Dominicans often prefer herbal remedies and traditional healers over biomedicine? For which illnesses do they commonly use medicinal plants? How safe are herbal remedies used by Dominican immigrants in New York City? These and other questions are at the forefront of our presentations and training on Dominican ethnomedicine. The information we present is based on over a decade of research on urban ethnomedical practices, some of which was sponsored by the National Institutes of Health/National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NIH/NCCAM), the United Hospital Fund, and the Aetna Foundation.

CLASSES IN ETHNOMEDICAL SPANISH

We offer classes in Spanish spoken by Dominican and Caribbean patients when they talk about health and well-being. These classes teach cultural synonyms for illness (*quebranto*), plant remedies (*matas, palos, hojas*), and traditional herbal preparations (*botella, bebedizo*). They represent a valuable addition to mainstream medical Spanish taught in medical curricula and can help guide physicians seeking to improve their conversations with Caribbean patients.

INFORMATION SESSIONS ON FOLK ILLNESSES

Are folk illnesses or culture-bound syndromes merely cultural expressions of psychiatric syndromes or do they have a physiological etiology that also merits biomedical attention? We hold information sessions on the etiology, symptomatology and popular treatments of a variety of conditions observed in Latino communities, including *empacho, pasmo, susto, pecho apretado, mal de ojo, culebrilla, disipela, madrejón, empeine, viento malo, nervios, frialdad* and *brujería*.

LEARN HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT HERBAL REMEDIES AND FOLK ILLNESSES

THE INTERVIEW PRACTICE (IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH)

Our bilingual interview training sessions teach participants how to ask their patients questions with the appropriate level of cultural skill and sensitivity. Trainees practice how to speak with patients about their cultural beliefs related to health conditions and their use of herbal remedies in a non-judgmental way.

ROLE-PLAY EXERCISES

Role-play exercises provide an ideal opportunity for a group of medical students, residents or physicians to practice responses to a simulated real life situation as might be found in clinical practice, involving cultural beliefs and practices.

Participants are given the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their problem-solving behaviors and reactions in group.

GUIDED VISIT TO A BOTÁNICA IN NEW YORK CITY

Botánicas are part of the parallel healthcare system in any United States city with a sizable Latino population. *Botánicas* are retail stores that sell herbal remedies for physical health as well as candles, amulets and incense for spiritual and religious well-being. During the visit, trainees interact with a *Botánica* owner knowledgeable about the healing properties of plants and learn about the health conditions people seek advice for.

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN (NYBG)

NYBG's expertise in medicinal plants and their uses around the world provides important insights into the traditional medicine practiced by different cultural groups, both in the United States and in other parts of the world. In urban areas such as New York City, an important challenge faced by many physicians is how to bridge ethnicity, race, cultural beliefs, values, and practices that can otherwise hinder their efforts to provide effective healthcare services to their patients.

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information