



PRIDE IN OUR DIVERSITY

The following information is provided to help you become more aware of your patients' and co-workers' views, traditions and actions. While you can use this information as a guide, keep in mind that all people within a culture are **not** the same. Be sure to ask your patients and their families about specific beliefs, practices and customs that may be relevant and important during medical treatment and hospitalization.

When describing the Romanian culture, the following information may apply to Romanian people visiting from Romania, first generation Romanian-Americans or ensuring generations of Romanian-Americans. Each piece of information does not necessarily apply to all Romanian people.



## general information

- ▼ Most Romanian people prefer to be addressed formally. Address patient by Mrs. and Mr. + last name, unless the patient asks you to use their first name (especially younger.)
- ▼ When addressing a Romanian patient, be respectful, professional, but not distant
- ▼ Traditionally, the Romanian culture is male-dominant, especially among the older generations.
- ▼ The Romanian culture is influenced greatly by Greek Orthodox beliefs. The remaining Romanian religions are Greek catholic, protestant and Jewish.

## *inter-personal relationships*

### **family**

- ✓ Older patients may feel happy to be asked about the geographic area in which he/she lived. (There are 3 main areas in Romania: Mumtemia (S), Transylvania (N, N-W) and Moldova (N-E).

### **religion**

- ✓ Most Romanians are Greek Orthodox.
- ✓ Patient may ask to eat without meat and dairy products and eggs on Wednesday, Fridays and during Lent (Christmas, Pascha).
- ✓ May want to wear an icon around their neck.
- ✓ May want to keep some items with them at all times like icons or pieces of cloth touched by an uncorrupted body.
- ✓ May ask to drink holy water in the morning, before eating or drinking something else.
- ✓ May ask to have an orthodox priest for "ointment" (a healing service) - drops of oil on the incision (affected part).

### **gestures**

- ✓ OK sign (hand gesture) is offensive.
- ✓ Thumbs up (gesture) means "okay."
- ✓ A slightly bent head means "hello."
- ✓ If a man kisses the hand of a nurse or female doctor this is a sign of "thank you" and respect.

*treatment issues*

**medical treatment**

- ✓ Accepts need for medical care but might be anxious about that condition
- ✓ May ask for “best doctor” and “best treatment”
- ✓ May take tea (herbal medicine)

**care**

- ✓ May not want to put a relative in a nursing home.
- ✓ Is happy to have medical visit at home.

**responses to pain**

- ✓ Men tolerate acute pain but not chronic (chronic conditions complain more)
- ✓ Women tolerate chronic pain but not acute.
- ✓ Willingness to ask for medicine for pain relief.

**dietary preferences**

- ✓ Tend to eat fatty foods.
- ✓ Family may desire to bring food from home.
- ✓ For some diseases (e.g. sore throat) may ask for hot food and refuse cold food.

**death**

- ✓ According to Greek Orthodox religion - after death, a person is judged by the God and sent to heaven or hell, depending on that person’s life, faith and deeds. In order to be “cleaned” by the sins, a dying patient may ask for a priest, for confession and communion.
- ✓ Family may light candles.
- ✓ Organ donation is generally acceptable in the Romanian culture.

g l o s s a r y	
word	meaning
Buna Dimineata	Good Morning
Buna Ziua	Good Afternoon
Buna Seara	Good Evening
Salut	Hi!
Mama	Mother
Tata	Father
Bunica	Grandmother
Bunic	Grandfather
Mancare	Food
Apa	Water
Biserica	Church
Va Rog	Please
Da	Yes
Nu	No
Doare?	Does it hurt?
Unde?	Where?
Familie	Family
Pofta Buna	Enjoy your meal/ bon appetit
Cu Placere	You're welcome
La Multiani	Happy Birthday
Moroc	Good luck
Doame Ajuta	God Bless
Durere	Pain

*important*  
holidays & dates

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
St. Basil	January 1
Epiphany	January 6
Easter (Pascha)	Varies (like Greek Orthodox)
St. Mary	September 8
St. Parascheva	October 14 (Romanian)
Romanian National Day	December 1
Christmas	December 25
New Year's Eve	December 31

◆ Sources  
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