The Amish

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What is Amish Health to You?
251,000 live in the United States and Canada
There are 456 settlements across the United States and Canada
13,330 live in Michigan
80 families live in Mecosta County
Cultural Descriptors

- Community based
- Minimal technology
- Strong work ethic
- Minimal education requirements
- Strong dedication to the church
- Men vs. Women’s job roles
- Holistic healing/ “God’s will”
- Natural healing remedies
Bias Possibilities

- Viewed as different and subordinate
- Inconveniences produced
- Inbreeding
- Incompetence
- Uncleanly
Health Risk Factors

- Incest (genetic diseases)
- Difficult Pregnancies
- Farming accidents
- Heat stroke
- Dental issues
- Diseases (not vaccinated)
Amish Birth Rate

Amish families have five or more children

Amish baby boom

The Amish population in the U.S. and Canada has doubled in the past 20 years.

1991: 123,550
2010: 249,495

SOURCE: Elizabethtown College’s Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies
Amish vs. Cancer

• Dr Judith Westman performed an 8 year study on 24 different types of cancer within the Amish community in Ohio
• Dr. Westman compared the Amish cancer rates with the rest of the population in Ohio. This was then compared to the United States cancer statistics.
• Westman found that the Amish cancer rate “40% lower than in the rest of population in Ohio” and “63% lower than United States”
• Studies found there was almost no occurrences of cervical cancer
• Lower rate of skin cancer
Environmental/Community Factors

• Conservative rural values
• Preference for natural antidotes
• Lack of information
• Awkwardness in high tech settings
• Difficulties accessing healthcare
• Willingness to suffer & lean on will of God
Environmental/Community Factors

- Cost
- Influence of Bishop
- Lack of technology based prenatal checkups
- Restricted medication use
- Lack of disease prevention
  - causing small endemics
Health Promotion Theory

• Needs Theory
  – Virginia Henderson
    • Nurses care for the patient until the patient is able to care for themselves.
    • “describes people as whole, with many complex needs that motivate behavior. Everyone meets his or her needs in a unique way and may defer satisfying needs if they are not viewed as a priority at that time.”
Healthy People 2020

• Attain high-quality, longer lives free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death.

• Achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups.

• Create social and physical environments that promote good health for all.

• Promote quality of life, health development, and healthy behavior across all life stages.
Literature: Amish Go Their Own Way on Healthcare

- Exempt from Social Security taxes
- No medical insurance
- Healthcare funded through church aid, benefit auctions, and negotiated discounts with local hospitals.
- Extremely community-oriented
- Medical costs kept down through more active lifestyles.
Literature: Unique Aspects of Nursing Care for Amish Children

• School is finished by the eighth grade level
• Language barriers (young children)
• Hospital gown considerations
• Familial support

• Death – “God’s will”
• Generosity and thankfulness – “to reject their gift is to reject them as persons” (Banks & Benchot, 2001).
Literature: Spiritual and Alternative Health Practices

- A strong spiritual life and natural remedies contribute to health and well-being.
- Exercise is generally not needed.
- Family physicians
- Alternative therapies are limited.
- Overall, the “Belief in the power of prayer to heal, the use of natural remedies to cure, and trust in God's control over individual health” contribute to the Amish ideal of health and wellness (Sharpnack, Benders, Griffin, & Fitzpatrick, 2010).
AMISH QUESTION

• What organ cannot be transplanted from the Amish body?
  – A. Lung
  – B. Kidney
  – C. Eyes
  – D. Heart
• HEART –
  – The heart is the soul of the body...Unless the child has not be baptized
References


References Continued


