



STANFORD
UNIVERSITY



Mental Health Aspects of Diabetes in Elders from Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds

Japanese American Elders

Prepared by:

Kellie Takagi, PhD

Based on work by:

Kellie Takagi, PhD; Nancy Hikoyeda, DrPH; Caroline Fee, MA;
Gwen Yeo, PhD (Ed.)

Background

- ❑ First generation immigrants (called *Issei*) worked in the fields of Hawaii in the 1860's.
- ❑ The current cohort of older Japanese Americans, known as *Nisei*, are the second generation, children of the *Issei*.
- ❑ Traditional Japanese families were vertically structured and male-dominated.
- ❑ The social structure and moral codes were based on Meiji era Confucian values (e.g., filial piety, deference to authority)

Background (cont.)

- ❑ During World War II, the Japanese were removed from their homes and placed in camps
- ❑ 1990's, after battle with Congress survivors were given redress and reparations
- ❑ Labeled as “model minority” and belief that Japanese American families “take care of their own”
 - ❑ This belief has prevented elders from receiving government assistance
- ❑ Since most Japanese American elders are now Nisei or Sansei, most speak English.

Diabetes - Risk

- ❑ Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (Rodriguez et al., 2002)
 - ❑ 80% of the original 8,006 Japanese American men (age 71-93) were interviewed in 1991-93.
 - ❑ Prevalence of impaired glucose metabolism was 18%
- ❑ King County Washington (Fujimoto et al., 1987)
 - ❑ 56% of Japanese American men (age 45-74) were found to have abnormal glucose tolerance and 20% had diabetes
 - ❑ 1/2 of the men with diabetes were undiagnosed

Diabetes - Risk (cont.)

- Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (Rodriguez, Burchfiel et al., 1996)
 - Lower prevalence of Type II diabetes
 - Higher levels of physical activity
 - Consumption of more carbohydrates
 - Less fat
 - Less animal proteins

Diabetes – Culturally Appropriate Management



- Cultural Remedies for Diabetes
 - Herbs - traditional Japanese Medicine (Kampo)
 - Dietary Practices – based on Chinese Medicine Theory of imbalance of yin (cold) and yang (hot)
 - Theory – Kampo remedies will restore or unblock “Ki” (vital life force in the body)
 - Cultural Healers –herbalists, acupuncturists, massage therapists

Diabetes – Culturally Appropriate Management



□ Resources

- Japanese Kampo. <http://www.honsousa.com/>
- Kenner, D. (2001). The role of traditional herbal medicine in modern Japan. www.acupuncturetoday.com.
- Kittler, P.G., & Sucher, K.P. (2004). *Food and culture (4th ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson
- Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database. www.naturaldatabase.com
- Rister, R. (1997). *Japanese herbal medicine: The healing art of Kampo*. Garden City Park, NY: Avery Publishing Group.

Diabetes – Nutrition



Education for Treatment of Diabetes

- ❑ Traditional foods
 - ❑ **fruits:** oranges, tangerines, melons, pear apples, persimmons (fruits are usually served fresh and for dessert), plums (fresh, preserved, salted)
 - ❑ **vegetables:** bamboo shoots, bean sprouts, cabbage, daikon radish, onions, ginger, mushrooms (shitake and others), seaweed
 - ❑ **grains:** short grain rice, wheat and buckwheat (used in noodles);
 - ❑ **dairy products:** in traditional Japanese diets, dairy products are not commonly consumed;
 - ❑ **protein sources:** fish/shellfish (raw, cooked, dried, smoked), soybeans (tofu, miso), meats (bite size pieces of chicken, and beef)), legumes (soybeans, red beans, lima beans) and
 - ❑ **green tea.** A typical meal includes soup, rice, and other dishes that are shared (fish dishes are common).

Nutrition - Acculturation Issues

- ❑ Influential factors to American diets
 - ❑ Length of residence in U.S.
 - ❑ Education level
 - ❑ Ability to speak English
- ❑ Other factors
 - ❑ Food availability
 - ❑ Quality
 - ❑ Cost
- ❑ Breakfast choices are the most evident of dietary acculturation
 - ❑ Risk factors include diseases like type 2 diabetes

Nutrition – Strategies

- ❑ Make healthy food choices
- ❑ Control food portions
- ❑ Modify recipes
- ❑ Resources
 - ❑ Kittler, P. G., & Sucher, K.P. 2004. *Food and culture* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Nutrition – Strategies (cont.)

- Resources, implementation strategies
 - Georgia State University. *Nutrition education for new Americans project (Japanese language version)*: Available at <http://monarch.gsu.edu/nutrition/Japanese.htm>
 - Nasco Food Replicas: Available from Nasco Nutrition Teaching Aids. www.eNASCO.com
- Registered Dietitians or Certified Diabetes Educators
 - www.eatright.org
 - www.diabeteseducator.org

Relative - Depression

- ❑ Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (Takeshita, Masaki et al., 2002)
 - ❑ Physically healthy, depressed older Japanese American men had higher mortality than the physically ill.
- ❑ Five populations of older Asian immigrants in New York City (Mui et al., 2003)
 - ❑ 72% to 76% Japanese American elders scored in the depressed range of the Geriatric Depression Scale.
 - ❑ This was the highest percentage of the five populations.

Relative – Cognitive Loss and Dementia

- Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (Kalmijn, Foley et al., 2000)
 - Syndrome X or metabolic cardiovascular syndrome (cluster of cardiovascular risk factors including impaired glucose tolerance and high blood pressure) was found to increase the risk of vascular dementia but not Alzheimer's disease

Relative – Cognitive Loss and Dementia (cont.)

- Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (White, Petrovitch et al., 1996)
 - Prevalence of Alzheimer's disease in the Hawaii sample was 5.4%, higher than in Japan but similar to Americans of European ancestry.
 - Prevalence of vascular dementia was found to be 4.2%, slightly lower than in Japan but higher than in those of European-ancestry

Relative – Cognitive Loss and Dementia (cont.)



- ❑ Associated Honolulu Heart Program (HHP) (Ross, Webster, Abbott et al., 1997)
 - ❑ 21% of family informants failed to recognize memory problems in subjects diagnosed with dementia
 - ❑ 52% mild dementia was unrecognized by family
 - ❑ 13% severe dementia was unrecognized by family