Moldovan

Originally claimed by Russia as the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1940, Moldova achieved independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Britannica Moldova 2015).

Since independence, 17% of the total Moldovan population has emigrated, predominately in search of economic opportunity (MPC Moldova 2013). As of 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau reports 36,825 Moldovan individuals in the United States (USCB ACS 2013).

To respond to the particular healthcare needs of this community, CultureVision now includes a Moldovan cultural group. A small preview of cultural information from the page is available here; to see the content and citations in full, visit www.culturevision.com.

CONCEPT OF HEALTH
A majority of Moldovans identify as Orthodox Christian, believing God is the “Divine Physician” and healer of souls and bodies (Healthcare Chaplaincy 2013). While medical interventions are generally accepted, healing is also facilitated through prayer and participation in the church. Clergy are often consulted during illness to pray and read scriptures to the ailing.

COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS
A survey of Moldovans found that many report their health as “less than good” (Abbott 2007), including 48% of women and 39.7% of men. Some of the reported health issues amongst the community include:
- **Nutrition** – 26% of preschool age children suffer from Vitamin A deficiency
- **Tuberculosis** - WHO European Region identifies Moldova as the 18th highest priority country
- **Female HIV Infections** – Rates increased from 25% in 2000 to 45% in 2004

FAMILY STRUCTURE & RELATIONSHIPS
Family structure is generally traditional, with the mother responsible for child-rearing and the father responsible for family income (Yanovich 2015). With a large proportion of the Moldova population becoming reliant on remittances from the migrant worker to support their families, it is estimated that 100,000 children have been left behind by a migrant parent. Children who have been left behind in Moldova have been found to experience drug use, psycho-emotional problems and more.
Did You Know? Cultural Differences in Traditional Treatments

Some patients may use alternative forms of care or traditional treatments such as herbal medications, acupuncture, energy treatments, nutritional supplements, and religious healing, among others. Learning about your patient’s norm(s) can help with anticipating potential interactions and patient compliance.

Traditional treatments are cultural healing practices (spiritual, herbal, etc.) that some patients may use to treat medical illness, and can differ by culture or country of origin. In order to provide culturally competent care, it is important for health care providers to be aware of what traditional treatments a patient may use in combination with, or opposed to, Western biomedicine.

The following is a preview of traditional treatment practices from varying cultures that can be found in the identified group pages on www.culturevision.com.

VIETNAMESE
- **Coining/Coin Rubbing** – A common treatment to correct the influence of gio (wind), and thereby restore equilibrium (Moore 2005, Kemp and Rasbridge 2004). A coin dipped in mentholated oil or balm is rubbed on the neck, back, chest in downward motions away from the center of the body to release the “wind” that causes illnesses such as fever, upper respiratory infections, “weak heart”, nausea, loss of appetite, headache, muscle soreness, and dizziness. It is not unusual for the process to leave welts on the body which may be mistaken for abuse.

CENTRAL AMERICAN
- **Greta and Azarcó** – Sometimes used by Central Americans as a treatment for stomachache or intestinal illness (empacho) (La Clinica del Pueblo 1994-97; Murgua et al 2003). *Greta* is a bright yellow powder, and *Azarcón* is a bright orange powder that is also known as *rueda*, coral, Maria Luisa, or *liga*. Both are lead/mercury oxides which are poisonous.

MOLDOVAN
Herbal medicines are not regulated in Moldova and are sold in pharmacies as over counter medicines (WHO TM 2005). Anecdotal evidence suggests the following may be common Moldovan cold and flu remedies (Glasser 2015):
- **Slanina** – Slabs of cured, brined or smoked pork fat that are sliced like cheese and eaten with a piece of bread. *Slanina* has large quantities of vitamins A, D, and B to boost immune systems and fat to absorb nutrients and provide energy.
- **Lejianca (Moldovan Hot Bed)** – A clay oven with a bed built on top of it is often used as a source of heat for homes in the winter. Some Moldovans may use the hot bed to create a makeshift sweat lodge to sweat out illness.

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