
## Culturally Congruent Care for the Yemeni Woman

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### Cultural/Religious Beliefs & Practices
- Prevalent religion: Islam  
- Belief in the five pillars of Islam  
- Friday: Weekly day of rest  
- Importance of modesty  
- Fatalistic attitudes toward life and death: Accepting illness as “will of God”  
- Belief that evil eye-causes illness  
- Belief in seeking healing through folk healers, pharmacists, and descendants of the Prophet Muhammad

### Mortality Rate

![Mortality Rate Chart](image)

Figure 1. Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births

- Infant mortality rate 75 per 1,000 live births

### Pregnancy Care
- Very few receive prenatal care: For many 4-6 hours of travel time to seek care  
- Desire to be supported by other women during childbirth  
- Husband absent during labor  
- Woman’s authority vs. husband’s role in choice of birth attendant, and delivery position and location  
- Resume work quickly after delivery  
- Postpartum depression under-recognized and under-treated  
- Idea of “self” may not exist  
- Tolerate hardships out of cultural expectations, concern for marital insecurity, and fear of shame from community members

### Women’s Health Issues
- Maternal mortality  
- Postpartum hemorrhage  
- Malnutrition and anemia  
- Infection  
- Miscarriages  
- Complications from unsafe abortions  
- Delayed treatment  
- High prevalence of home births (76%)  
- Lack of prenatal care  
- Young age at pregnancy  
- Close birth spacing  
- Low prevalence of contraception  
- Female genital cutting

### Newborn Care
- Husband attends to newborn  
- Decline in breastfeeding due to:  
  - Poor lactation—possibly due to khat chewing  
  - Early weaning  
  - Postpartum depression  
- Increased bottle feeding and related concern of over-dilution with contaminated water

### Culturally Congruent Care
- Conduct a thorough cultural assessment to discover important beliefs and needs  
- Avoid stereotypes  
- Preserve modesty and accommodate for female caregiver when requested  
- Provide halal diet  
- Encourage woman’s authority  
- Discourage khat chewing during pregnancy  
- Discourage/reshape female genital cutting

References available upon request from kbasham@umflint.edu or hibewale@umflint.edu