



# A Nutrition Curriculum to Facilitate Hispanic Women's Adherence to Dietary Behavior Change.

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## Introduction:

Type 2 diabetes is a major health concern for Hispanic women. Incidence rates of diabetes are higher for Hispanic women than men. Currently, there are over 2 million Latinos age 20 and older with diabetes. Men =11.3%, women =14.2%. One quarter, or 25% of Hispanic women have been diagnosed with diabetes. Diabetes is the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among Hispanic women (33% of deaths).

Although there are genetic factors, adherence to healthy lifestyle such as diet has a major influence. Given these statistics, Diabetes Educators need to be cognizant of the increased need for culturally competent education focusing on facilitating adherence to a healthy diet.

We developed and piloted a culturally relevant nutrition curriculum designed for use by a promotora to educate Hispanic women on their dietary choices and how they affect their diabetes.

## Barriers Hispanic woman have identified to making healthy lifestyle choices:

- Language
- Health beliefs: "It is God's Will"
- Presentismo: emphasis on present time illness delays care

•**Familismo:** family first before self

•**Economic status**

•**Cultural celebrations/Holidays**

•**Method of food prep:** lard, frying

## Teaching Strategies:

A curriculum was designed by an RN, a promotora and CRNP to promote problem solving and coping skills. The format was interactive (similar to the ADA Conversation Maps) This allowed participants to role play situations they face at home when trying to adhere to their meal plan. Skills from Motivational Interviewing such as affirmations and open-ended questions were incorporated, allowing participants to express what was most challenging to them (See Session III).

## Pilot Program :Using the model of a Promotora/Community Health Worker

An RN trained a promotora on the curriculum content and group teaching dynamics. The promotora met with a group of 4-6 participants once a week for 4 sessions, each 1 ½ hrs.

## The Curriculum:

4 session each 1 ½ hrs once per week.

## Session I

Topic	Activity
Ice Breaker for group	Nutrition Bingo
What is diabetes and how do you control it?	Discussion on diabetes, nutrition and exercise
Why is it important to care?	Discuss prevalence of Hispanics with diabetes
Understanding portions	View measuring cups and measuring spoons
How to fill out a food diary	Food diaries given to group to record intake

## Session II

Topic	Activity
Nutrition basics	Discuss how to eat a variety of foods, eat slower. A list of 10 tips including ways to meal plan on a budget.
Food groups/Food pyramid	Using the colors which represent each of the food groups, participants were taught which foods belong in which group.
Rate your plate	Participants were given a paper plate to draw a "typical" meal. A handout was given as to what a healthy plate should look like.

## Session III

Topic	Activity
Barriers to following my meal plan	Discussion prompting cards given to each person to read and discuss using open ended questions. Participants were given the chance to role play typical scenarios they face. Discuss family etiquette and what role family members play in their diabetes care.
Action Planning	Participants were asked to set a S.M.A.R.T. goal to improve one area of their meal plan.

## Session IV

Topic	Activity
Recipes	Participants brought in their favorite recipes for discussion on how to make them healthier.
Putting it all together	View DVD which shows other Hispanic people living with diabetes discussing how they adapt their meal plans. Participants given a recipe book and samples of healthy snacks were distributed.

## Responses to the Curriculum and Sessions:

"It helped me lose weight and know how to eat"

"I liked the way everything was explained"

"The Food pyramid was most helpful"

"The classes were very important. Knowing how many portions and what foods can help us have better health".

## Lessons Learned:

- Have the RN and promotora work together on the development of the curriculum to ensure content is culturally relevant and medically correct.
- Include group dynamics information into the training for promotora.
- Involve the whole family at some point in the lessons since family plays such a large part in Hispanic women's dietary choices/meal plans.
- Keep handouts simple, colorful, culturally relevant and watch literacy issues.
- Teach only 1-2 topics at a session.
- Be sure nutrition tips focus are specific to cultural foods.

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