

SPIRITUAL CARE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS FACTSHEET

Faith and spirituality are deeply rooted in African Americans historical culture.

- ✚ 83% of African Americans proclaim a certainty of the belief in God
- ✚ 75% report religion as an important part of their lives
- ✚ The connection of health and spirituality is essential to African Americans
- ✚ African American churches are a “strong social and religious force of unity” 1, 2

Many African Americans do not have any affiliation with any specific religion but believe religion is important. 3.



Spiritual Assessment

In 2010, The Joint Commission, advised that a Spiritual Assessment be conducted and included in the Medical record. A spiritual assessment allows patients to inform physicians about their spiritual beliefs and practices that may affect the way they manage their health. Ninety-four percent of patients who express spiritual and religious beliefs desire to discuss it with their physicians 4. Through your assessment you may learn about spiritual practices such as prayer and meditation, music meditation, reading sacred text i.e. the Bible or Koran, and food preferences.5.

Why is assessing Spirituality so important? A Spiritual assessment allows you to address care opportunities, and the following:

- Support your patients through empathetic listening
 - Incorporate the principles of your patients’ faith traditions into the treatment plan
 - Be knowledgeable about their support system that provides the patient with hope and strength
 - Understanding how it helps the patient deal with illness
 - Strengthen the provider-patient relationship
 - Encourage patients to use their spiritual traditions and communities for overall wellness
 - Encourage opportunities for your personal renewal, resiliency, and growth
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Spiritual Assessment Tool Examples

- ✚ FICA Spiritual History Tool - <https://smhs.gwu.edu/gwish/clinical/fica/spiritual-history-tool>
- ✚ HOPE Questions for Spiritual Assessment - <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2001/0101/p81.html>
- ✚ Open Invite Mnemonic Tool- <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2012/0915/p546.html>

Spirituality and Health Patient Information Sheet

- ✚ **Information from Your Family Doctor:** Spirituality and Health
<https://www.aafp.org/afp/2001/0101/p89.html>

References and Resources

- [www.FaithandHealthConnecton.org/wp-content/uploads/Spiritual Assessments-for-Health-Practitioners.pdf](http://www.FaithandHealthConnecton.org/wp-content/uploads/Spiritual%20Assessments-for-Health-Practitioners.pdf)
 - Spiritual Assessment Tool/Communication Tools: <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2012/0915/p546.html>;
 - https://www.geneticcounselingtoolkit.com/pdf_files/Cultural%20and%20Spiritual%20Mnemonic%20Tools%2011.06.09.pdf
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 2. Giger, Appel, Davidhizar & Davis (2008) Church and Spirituality in the Lives of the African American Community. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*. 2008;19(4):375-383. doi:10.1177/1043659608322502.
 3. Pew Research Center (2009) A Religious Portrait of African Americans, <https://www.pewforum.org/2009/01/30/a-religious-portrait-of-african-americans/>
 4. Schmidt, C. A., Patterson, M. A., Ellis, A. M., & Nauta, H. L. (2017). Religious and Spiritual Assessment: A Standardized Patient Curriculum Intervention. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 13(7), 314–320. <https://doi-org.proxy-hs.researchport.umd.edu/10.1016/j.ecns.2017.05.007>
 5. Sagul A., & Phelps, K. (2012) The Spiritual Assessment Retrieved from: <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2012/0915/p546.html>

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