

Cultural Studies and the Human Body: Advanced Concepts

Cultural Studies · Answer Key · 18 Questions

1. In many Western cultures, the cultural construction of 'thinness' as an ideal body type is demonstrably linked to increased rates of which eating disorder diagnosis?

A) Bulimia nervosa

- B) Prader-Willi syndrome
- C) Pica
- D) Rumination disorder

2. The cultural phenomenon of 'iatrogenesis' refers to the unintended harm caused by which of the following?

A) Medical treatment or advice

- B) Natural biological processes
- C) Environmental pollutants
- D) Genetic predispositions

3. Cross-cultural studies of pain perception have indicated that while physiological pain signals are universal, the 'meaning' and expression of pain are significantly shaped by:

A) Cultural narratives and social learning

- B) Limbic system activity
- C) Cranial nerve integrity
- D) Endorphin production levels

4. The historical and cultural stigmatization of mental illness has been empirically linked to delayed or avoided seeking of medical help for conditions such as:

A) Schizophrenia

- B) Type 1 Diabetes
- C) Cystic fibrosis
- D) Hemophilia

5. The specific cultural practices surrounding childbirth, including the role of midwives versus obstetricians and the desired level of medical intervention, can significantly influence rates of which maternal or infant health outcome?

A) Cesarean section rates

- B) Adult-onset asthma prevalence
- C) Myopia progression
- D) Osteoporosis density

6. Research into the gut microbiome has revealed that diet, which is heavily influenced by culture, can alter the composition of gut bacteria, potentially impacting:

A) Immune system function and mood regulation

- B) Red blood cell count
- C) Bone marrow production
- D) Thyroid hormone synthesis

7. The cultural development of 'hygiene hypothesis' theories suggests that reduced exposure to certain microbes in early childhood, often due to modern Western hygienic practices, may contribute to an increase in:

A) Allergic diseases and autoimmune disorders

- B) Viral hepatitis
- C) Bacterial meningitis
- D) Tuberculosis

8. The cultural acceptance or rejection of specific medical interventions, such as vaccination, is a significant factor in the epidemiological patterns of which infectious disease?

A) Measles

- B) Alzheimer's disease
- C) Parkinson's disease
- D) Huntington's disease

9. The 'medicalization' of everyday life, a concept explored in cultural studies, describes the process by which non-medical issues become defined and treated as medical problems. An example is the medicalization of:

A) Aging and menopause

- B) Natural hair growth
- C) Sleep cycles
- D) Normal digestion

10. Cultural beliefs about the body's 'humors' or vital energies (e.g., Qi, Prana) have historically influenced traditional healing practices and dietary recommendations, which can have tangible effects on:

A) Cardiovascular health markers

- B) Neuron regeneration
- C) Mitochondrial function
- D) Enzyme kinetics

11. The cultural framing of cancer as a 'battle' or 'fight' can influence patient psychological responses and adherence to treatment regimens, impacting the body's physiological stress response through the activation of:

- A) The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis**
- B) The autonomic nervous system's parasympathetic branch
- C) The vagus nerve's afferent pathways
- D) The enteric nervous system

12. The cultural construction of 'gender' profoundly affects health outcomes, for instance, by influencing the diagnosis and treatment of conditions like:

- A) Autoimmune diseases (e.g., Lupus) which disproportionately affect women**
- B) Gout, which disproportionately affects men
- C) Color blindness, which is sex-linked
- D) Down syndrome, which is chromosomal

13. The cultural significance attached to physical appearance and body modification (e.g., tattoos, piercings, plastic surgery) can have direct physiological consequences, such as:

- A) Increased risk of infection and scarring**
- B) Enhanced immune response
- C) Improved proprioception
- D) Stimulation of neurogenesis

14. Cross-cultural analyses of nutrition reveal that the perceived 'healthiness' of food is often culturally determined, leading to variations in consumption patterns that impact the prevalence of:

- A) Obesity and type 2 diabetes**
- B) Vitamin D deficiency
- C) Iron overload disorders
- D) Macular degeneration

15. The cultural narrative surrounding aging, particularly in Western societies, often emphasizes 'youthfulness' and can lead to the medicalization of normal physiological changes associated with senescence, such as:

- A) Changes in skin elasticity and bone density**
- B) Increased cognitive processing speed
- C) Enhanced muscle regeneration
- D) Greater synaptic plasticity

16. The historical development of medical technologies and treatments, such as antibiotics, has been deeply intertwined with cultural responses to disease and has profoundly altered the human body's interaction with:

A) Bacterial pathogens

- B) Fungal infections
- C) Prion diseases
- D) Parasitic worms

17. Cultural beliefs about bodily fluids and their perceived properties (e.g., purity, potency) have historically influenced practices related to menstruation, birth, and wound healing, which could indirectly affect:

A) Rates of infection and disease transmission

- B) Bone fracture healing times
- C) Nerve conduction velocity
- D) Lipid metabolism

18. The cultural interpretation of physical symptoms, such as fatigue or pain, can lead to diverse diagnostic pathways and treatment outcomes, impacting the management of chronic conditions like:

A) Fibromyalgia

- B) Glaucoma
- C) Cataracts
- D) Tinnitus