

Qualitative Research Interview

Date / Time:

Location:

Individual interviewed:

Personal Characteristics:

I am examining recovered postpartum mothers who delivered a baby in the United States and how they perceived their treatment while in the hospital and at home. Food customs and beliefs of other countries outside of the United States have a strong influence on the recovery of mother and baby. I would like to know more about the influence of your birth country on postpartum recovery and foods that may be utilized during this time and if these customs were granted while in the hospital or at home in the United States. This is for a Cultural Food research project at California State University, Chico. Your privacy is respected and the study is voluntary, and you are not required to participate. You can also stop at any time. There is no risk in participating in this study. Are you available to answer questions about your postpartum recovery in the United States?

1. Has your cultural expectations for your postpartum care changed as you become more familiar with the United States culture?
2. How are foods used in postpartum recovery in your birth countries culture?
3. What were your expectations of postpartum care in the U.S. at the time of your delivery / postpartum care?
4. Do you have any cultural beliefs / practices from your birth country that you wished to be implemented during postpartum recovery?

5. ...if any (from above question) were your cultural beliefs / practices respected or acknowledged during your postpartum recovery in the hospital and at home?
6. Did you eat any special foods that help with strength and recovery from postpartum delivery?
7. Did your recovery period from postpartum in the hospital and at home, meet your expectations? How?
8. In your birth country how long does postpartum recovery last?
9. Are there any additional comments or questions that you would like to talk about?

Summary of Interviews

Coding: *Is bolded and italicized*

Participant #A: Txxxx

A#1: I was born in Vietnam but raised in the U.S. since I was a baby so I really only know U.S. culture or what my mom taught me.

A#2: When I was pregnant ***my mom would try to feed me certain foods to help me recover, but I wouldn't eat them.***

A#3: My expectations were as expected for U.S., I had "***the usual hospital stay for a day and then home with the baby.***"

A#4: Had no desire to implement her birth country beliefs.

A#5: My ***U.S. beliefs were respected***, but did not have any from Vietnam.

A#6: No special foods were eaten.

A#7: Everything went well with pregnancy, easy.

A#8: ***My mom said I should not go anywhere months to recover from delivery, but I ignored her wishes and went out after a few days.***

A#9: ***My mother had funny ideas about me going to my grandfather's funeral. She wouldn't allow me because it wasn't good for me to be around sad people. I also wasn't supposed to look at anything ugly or grotesque because then the***

baby would have a mean ugly face. I also wasn't supposed to eat mangoes, something about making hot, "Who knows?"

Participant #B: Yxxxx

A #1: No, but I see that they are different, I do **not wish** to have a child and **not have much rest afterwards**. *Rest is important for mother's strength* and baby.

A#2: Korean culture believes in the *hot and cold system*. When you are *pregnant you are hot* so we do *not eat spicy (hot) foods while pregnant*. *After delivery* mothers are considered *tired, worn out, and cold so she must eat hot foods to regain heat (strength)* in body. *Warm soup with seaweed and teas*. Don't eat broken foods or **foods that fall apart** easily like tofu, it can **encourage a weak child**.

A#3: *Lot's of rest* for me. *Family comes to help take care of baby and me*.

Privacy from non-family, but I had another pregnant woman in the room with me and her family also was in the room. I didn't like that.

A#4: After delivery I would like to have **rested more**. There is *21 days for new mothers to rest and be taken care of*. Hospital should *provide more foods that allow me to strengthen my body* and recover. *Mothers are honored and well taken care of*.

A#5: I was able to *receive hot tea*, but **told caffeine was not good for baby**. I received a **warm bowl of soup kind of like a stew**, not a light broth soup, but it did taste good.

A#6: **Seaweed soup** helps with *recovery from loss of blood* and helps me *be warm (or hot)*. Delivery makes the *mother cold and she has to gain strength with food and rest*. This *soup is eaten for several weeks to gain strength and clean body of toxins*.

A#7: No, especially not in the hospital. The hospital wants you out as soon as possible and I was **expected to immediately have my baby in the room and was left to care for her**. The rooms are not very comfortable for family to stay so I often had to ask for help from nurses. My *family helped when they were there*. At **home I was allowed to rest**. My family (*mother*) *came to help, clean, cook, and take*

care of the baby and my husband. My husband is from U.S. and is white so **his family didn't understand why 2 weeks after birth I was still resting.** They thought I should **get out of the house and get fresh air and that it would be good for the baby.**

A#8: We are expected to rest **for 21 days and allowed to eat and sleep and nothing else.** Mothers are treated well.

A#9: I felt like **having my baby was all about the baby and not me.** The baby needed a lot of attention and I was supposed to do the work because I am the woman. This is the feeling that I **got from my husbands side** of the family and other people, not my family. **I was told to get out of bed and shower the day after my C-section. I couldn't believe it, because I had no energy to stand and I did not want an infection to enter my incision**

Participant #C: Mxx

A#1: Yes they have changed a lot. In China the cultural beliefs are so that you feel **peer pressure to follow the traditional care,** if you don't you are considered to be a person that does not take of yourself. **I am in the U.S. now so I will do what I want; don't feel the need to follow tradition.**

A#2: *Postpartum foods* typically used are **broth soup made from the whole hen (head, feet, etc.), or pork feet broth because it enhances breast milk production.** A type of **herbed medicine kind of like a tea that is boiled, strained, and then you drink it like a tea and is very dark. This medicine is to regain strength and rid toxins from blood.** Brown sugar water to improve blood circulation and rid **toxins.** We eat hard-boiled eggs, green onions, ginger (hot food), yellow rice wine in broth to cover the taste of the meat. **Don't drink water for 1 month before delivery, but instead boil the alcohol off of rice wine and drink that instead.** It is **suppose to prevent edema.** It's a big no, **no to eat chives,** no way.

A#3: Didn't have a lot of time to plan or think about pre or post partum care as I became pregnant unexpectedly.

A#4: Cultural beliefs or practices that she believes should be implemented at hospitals for postpartum care are foods available for an **Asian diet.** Not so much

cheese. There was **cheese in everything**. Options for no ice water and or appropriate foods such as **warm broth soups**, but not foods that are considered hot foods and or cold foods and served at inappropriate times. ***She wished nurses would have paid attention to her***, as she was given a meal plan option, but the **option was already picked by staff**, leaving her with no option. Also the staff **rushed her through her meal**. Her ***family would bring in foods such as noodle soups that were more appropriate***.

A#5: When asked if her **cultural beliefs** were acknowledged she stated the things that were **not acknowledged**. She ***felt disrespected and ignored, she would ask for warm water and they would bring her ice water or cold apple juice***. Her milk had not come in for breast-feeding and she shared her concern with the nurses so ***she wanted to give her baby sugar water, which is a tradition in China***. The **staff refused and made her feel like she would kill or poison the baby if she did that**. **Her baby ended up with jaundice days later when she returned to the hospital, she felt it was from lack of milk and feels awful that her baby starved for 3 days**.

A#6: Special ***foods eaten for recovery*** were ***pork feet soup***. This ***soup has collagen in it from the connective tissue and the belief is that it helps heal body wounds and muscles***. Also green leafy vegetables i.e. ***Napa cabbage & spinach to increase iron in blood***. Oatmeal reduces breast milk production so it should not be eaten.

A#7: Expectations at home and in hospital were not met. She states that ***she should wear long sleeve shirt regardless of the temperature and should not use air conditioning***. She did not wear the long sleeves and did use air conditioning. The belief is that **after delivery your joints are open and you are susceptible to illness and cold**. She felt great so decided to not follow tradition, ***but in the end felt weak and sick and regrets not following it***.

A#8: In ***China postpartum recovery last about 30 days***, but **old tradition is about 3 months**. This includes ***no shower or brushing your teeth, no cleaning, cooking, working, you just lay in bed and rest and eat and feed the baby***.

A#9: She will encourage her daughter to follow tradition as she feels not following it has left her in a weakened state. She believes there is no scientific proof behind it but she believes it must be tradition for some reason.

My postpartum care was not what she had planned for. She wanted to rest more at home and expected mom to help more but her mom does not know how to cook, change a diaper, or care for people. Next time she will hire a helper to cook and help her recover.

Participant #D: Axxx

A#1: Definitely, depending on where one delivers in Mexico, it is different.

A#2: You should **not drink liquids too cold**. Avoid certain foods: chili, beans, oranges, pineapples—they can affect you or the baby.

First week or more, **eating chicken soup for meals**, drinkable avena (oatmeal). No pork. Chamomile **tea** is gentle to drink too.

The nurses/moms here do not watch what foods they eat and they seem to be ok.

A#3: I did not expect that my husband would take such a large part in the delivery.

In Mexico, the **dads are not allowed in the delivery room** so the **mom is by herself or in a room with other mom laboring together or with other women helping her deliver**. The nurses are the ones that care for you more than the doctors here. There are a lot more cesareans and epidurals (raquias) used in Mexico in the big cities—it makes it easier on the mom and the doctors/nurses.

Postpartum: My mother or other women would be around to help with the care and care of the infant. **They are the experts and you do as they say at least in the first 40 days**. I was **expected to care for my infant more than I would have in Mexico**. In Mexico, you rest longer after a C-section than here.

The **nurses and moms are not as careful about the cold air here**—The **moms in Mexico cover their heads and backs no matter the season so that they do not lose their milk supply**. There are more people helping you breastfeed here so it makes it easier and you have someone to help and answer questions. **They don't want you to give your baby formula even when you "don't have milk" in the first**

few days. It can be hard sometimes when you are tired or you are afraid that your baby will starve.

Depending on the experience of the grandmothers/aunts—some push the formula since they think that the mom does not have the milk the baby needs; but, other grandmothers/aunts tell you that you can feed many babies and it is easy to do. Plus, you should not give a bottle or pacifier. Just breast-feeding when the baby wants to. Some think that you must go through pain, crackled bleeding nipples before the breast feeding gets better. They think ***you need to watch the foods in the diet or it can affect the baby.*** Even, ***getting angry can spoil the milk and make the baby colicky or sick.***

Sometimes, in the USA, there are not many family members so moms do not get to rest like they should and are expected to go to many appointments versus having the doctor or nurse come to the home.

A#4: More rest for moms postpartum so they can focus on the breastfeeding and caring of the baby. Not enough help with regular chores and cooking and caring for the older child. Moms have to go out to appointments too soon and home visits to check on moms and babies. Moms are ***expected to return to work way to soon so breast-feeding is a challenge if you have a job that does not support it.*** It can be stressful to return to work if the baby does not want a bottle. More staff to speak the mothers (patients) language, so education for the mother (patient) could be understood or adjusted based on our culture.

A#5: Sometimes. Depends on the nurse, staff or doctor. Sometimes they seem to think ***their way is the only way and no flexibility*** if it is not harmful to the baby or me. The staff is always nice even when there is a lot of family and friends. Some nurses did seem annoyed but others were very friendly.

A#6: Chicken soup- it had veggies and chicken so it is healthy and Avena-to help make more milk. Made sure I ate 2-3 meals with 1-2 snacks. ***Lots of fluids-water, milk, juices.*** And ***rested during the day.***

A#7: With my first baby, the nurse would not let me keep my baby in the room because she said I was tired and needed to sleep and they would watch her; however, I was very alert after a few hours of sleep and wanted my baby near me in

the same room and I had to convince them to let me have her. ***Nowadays, they expect you to have the infant in the room vs. not.*** The Midwife was great and really listened to my needs in labor and postpartum. I was surprised how different my mom was when I came home and she was helpful and calm and caring—***I felt great and had very little to worry about except me/baby.*** I had friends who were lactation consultants who helped me when I got engorged or had concerns about breast-feeding.

I had a job where I could stay off for 5 months and enjoyed that, but would have been nice to stay off longer and not have to do 12-hour shifts.

Women who work in the fields and in fast food restaurants do not have that luxury. If they stay longer, they are financially strapped and do so because childcare is so expensive or they do not have family to help care for them.

A#8: It is expected that you ***rest for 40 days: grandmothers/aunts cook, clean and care for infant-bath, change the diapers. Moms cannot go outside to the "cold" air. And are sometimes kept in the same room and not much light or activity, which can worsen depression if they are sensitive to it.***

A#9: No, unless you need more clarifications/explanations on some of the answers I gave.