



**St. Richard's
Hospice**
C A R I N G F O R L I F E

CLINICAL CARE GUIDELINES

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION CARE GUIDELINES

Author and position	David Knight, Chaplain.			
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Christianity:

Generally, it is hard to separate out Christianity from mainstream English culture. This should not be taken to mean that an individual Christian's spiritual needs are predictable.

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 42,000,000 persons (roughly three quarters of the population).

General Information:

- Christianity was founded around 2000 years ago by Jesus of Nazareth in the area of modern day Israel and Palestine.
- 'Christ' is a Greek word meaning 'Messiah'. Messiah is a Hebrew word meaning 'Anointed One'.
- Christianity, along with Islam, has adopted the Jewish Scriptures as part of its collection of sacred writings.
- Christianity is the world's largest, most adaptable religion.
- There is a wide variety within world Christianity of beliefs, ethical standpoints and forms of worship.
- Jesus never wrote a book, never went to university and never travelled more than a few weeks walk away from his birthplace. He was a skilled craftsman who worked in (probably) the family carpentry business in Nazareth until the age of 30.
- This apparently modest background does not prepare us for what happened next.
- For three years he travelled on foot around the villages and towns of Galilee and environs, teaching, healing and gathering a sizeable following.
- He was executed by crucifixion and Christians believe that he rose from the dead.
- Within a generation there were Christians within the Emperor's household in Rome. Within a few centuries, the Roman Emperor declared the Empire to be Christian.

There are at least 225 denominations (groups) in the UK. The main ones are:

- Anglican churches – *The Church of England, The Scottish Episcopal Church, The Church in Wales, the Church in Ireland.*
- The Roman Catholic Church
- Protestant (or Free) Churches – *United Reformed Church, The Church of Scotland (established church in Scotland), Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist, Salvation Army, Lutheran, Moravian, Plymouth Brethren, Pentecostal, Black-majority churches, Seventh Day Adventist Church, House Churches, Covenant Community Church, Quakers (Religious Society of Friends), Unitarian Church.*
- Orthodox Churches – *Greek Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Serbian Orthodox Church, Coptic Orthodox Church, Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Syrian Orthodox Church.*

Ritual :

- Christianity has many and varied forms of worship (in some traditions some are called *sacraments*). The most common are:
- The Holy Communion (also called The Mass, the Eucharist and The Lord's Supper). This ritual recalls the last meal that Jesus shared before his death.
- Holy Baptism (also called Christening). This involves an anointing with water (and sometimes oil as well) to indicate an intention to live after the pattern and example of Jesus of Nazareth.
- There are also – depending in part on denomination, in part on geography - rituals around marriage, penitence, sickness and dying.
- In some traditions there are prayers for different times of day (eg. Matins and Evensong)
- Some churches have very simple worship and no ministers, while others have highly elaborate forms and hierarchies of ministry.

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Healthcare implications

No particular implications for normal hospice procedures.

Prayer

- The patient or family may wish to see a priest or other minister. Catholic patients will nearly always want to see a priest.

Diet

- Some Christians may wish to give up certain foods during Lent (the 40 day period from Ash Wednesday to Easter, excluding Sundays). Some may fast prior to receiving Holy Communion. Some do not eat red meat on Fridays.
- Alcohol and tobacco are not permitted in a number of denominations eg. Methodism.

Modesty

- Some small, more sect like churches may have other, particular requirements around: modesty (Asian Christians and e.g. Plymouth Brethren); special articles of clothing (eg CJCLDS*); diet (some African and South Asian Christians avoid pork); or other issues.

** Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints – also called Mormons.*

Organ Donation

- Jehovah's Witnesses forbid blood transfusions and will not eat food containing blood.

Death and Dying

Care of the Dying

- Variety is again the order of the day. Christians who have meditated regularly will need quiet to meditate etc. Many denominations have set rituals for the closing of a life. Some may request the 'Last Rites' from a priest. Other churches may have nothing formal but may still have a tradition of prayer and reading from the Bible to comfort the dying.

Procedure at Death

- No mainstream Christian denomination forbids cremation now. In England around 80% are cremated and 20% are buried (those proportions are reversed in the countryside). A crucifix may be inappropriate for members of many protestant churches. A plain cross is an acceptable symbol for most Christians.

Post Mortem

- In the main there is no objection. However, attitudes vary in the smaller denominations.

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Islam

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 1,590,000 persons (roughly three per cent of the population).

General Information:

Islam is the Arabic name for the Muslim religion. The term means 'surrender to God's will' and includes acceptance of those articles of faith, commands and ordinances revealed through the Prophet Mohammed. There are a number of different strands of Islam that have emerged over history - principally Sunni and Shia - in much the same way that Christianity has acquired different traditions and emphases. These different branches have much in common but in some parts of the world there is antipathy - especially where there is an ethnic divide. Mecca, near the Red Sea coast of Saudi Arabia, is the religious centre for Muslims and a place of pilgrimage from all parts of Islam. It was here that Mohammed was born and began his teaching. There are four chief religious duties for a Muslim: prayer (five times a day), alms giving, fasting and a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Healthcare implications

Prayer

- Takes place five times a day - after dawn, around noon, mid afternoon, after sunset and at night. Ritual washing is required. The very sick are exempt but many may wish to pray sitting or lying down if they can no longer stand or kneel. The direction of Mecca (roughly south east) will need to be established.
- There are many Muslim festivals, all calculated by the lunar calendar. Ask the patient or the family if any important dates for their faith occur during their stay in hospital.

Diet

- Some meat is permitted as long as it has been slaughtered according to the Halal ritual, which drains the animal of blood. Halal lamb, beef and chicken are eaten, but pork meat and blood are forbidden.
- Cheese is fine unless it contains non Halal animal rennet.
- Fish (provided it has scales and fins - but also including prawns) and eggs are allowed but must not be cooked where pork and non-halal meat is cooked.
- Even a cake if it has been baked in a tin greased with lard is forbidden.
- Alcohol is forbidden - including in food. It may only be used in medicines if no alternative is available. Many Muslims will politely refuse food if they are unsure of its provenance.

Fasting

- During the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast between sunrise and sunset, although those who are sick are not required to fast.

Personal care

- It says in the Koran (Qur'an) that every Muslim must wash parts of the body thoroughly in running water three times before praying. Consequently, Muslims attach great importance to cleanliness - hands, feet and mouth are always washed before and after prayer.
- The ritual washing follows a set routine: the face, ears and forehead; the feet and the ankles; the hands to the elbows; water is sniffed up the nose and the mouth is rinsed.
- Muslims prefer the use of a shower rather than a bath.
- Women will wish to be particularly scrupulous about hygiene during menstruation.

Modesty

- Muslim women may prefer to be seen or treated by a female doctor. Asian women in general prefer to be examined by females and may be embarrassed by short gowns.

Organ Donation

- There are no specific rulings prohibiting transplantation, but strict Muslims will not agree to organ transplants, and the subject should not be raised unless the family initiates the discussion.
- **Blood Transfusion** is permitted.

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Death and dying

Care of the dying

- Dying Muslims may wish to sit or lie facing Mecca. Moving the bed to make this possible will be appreciated.
- The family may recite prayers around the bed. If the patient's family is not available, any practising Muslim can help.
- The patient may wish the Imam (religious leader) to visit.

Procedure at death

After death, non-Muslims should not touch the body. Health workers who need to touch the body should wear disposable gloves. The body should be prepared according to the wishes of the family. If the family is available they will take care of the body and should be left to do so. The family should be allowed privacy for grief. Some Muslims may be steered not to express emotion, others, especially women, may express their grief openly.

If the family is not available, the following procedures should be followed:

- Turn the head towards the right shoulder and straighten the limbs before rigor mortis begins. This is so that the body can be buried with the face towards Mecca.
- The head should be facing roughly south east (towards Mecca) – this may necessitate moving the bed if it hasn't already been done – and the feet should be pointing away from Mecca. The family may already have established the direction of Mecca in the room.
- **Do not wash the body, or cut hair or nails.**
- Wrap the body in a plain white sheet – this may already have been provided by the family.
- Do not wear anything red.

Muslims believe in the resurrection of the body after death, so they are always buried and never cremated. The family and Muslim undertakers will ritually wash the body. Muslim funerals take place as soon as practicable. If a delay is unavoidable, explain the reason carefully to the relatives.

- If the death has to be reported to the coroner, he or she should be informed that the patient was a Muslim and be asked if the procedure can take place as soon as possible. If the family wishes to view the body, staff should ask the mortician to ensure that the room is free of any religious symbols.

Post-mortem

- In Islam the body is considered to belong to God so, strictly speaking, no part of the dead body should be cut or harmed. Post mortems are therefore forbidden unless ordered by the coroner. This should be explained clearly to the family. The family may request that organs removed should be returned to the body after examination.

Funeral Director

- For most of Worcester city the Muslim community seem to use A V Band of Lowesmoor tel. 01905 22048. They are experienced and confident in handling specific religious requirements.
- The Mosque and its religious leadership will tend to take the lead in organising a funeral.

Burial ground

- There is a special cemetery/ burial ground on the Droitwich Rd., located near the Park and Ride Depot. This is usually locked unless prior arrangements have been made.
- Mr Ditta (formerly the Mayor and now a governor of St. Richard's) is a key figure with the Mosque in Worcester. He has in the past liaised with local funeral directors regarding funeral requests.

Finally, some random do's and don'ts in addition to the above ...

1. Make sure you know which language the family speaks in.
2. Make sure you know which language the family writes in.
3. Do get an interpreter in if you have to explain sensitive issues to those with poor English – family members don't always translate as well as you might want.
4. Don't shout at people who don't speak English – it will not help them understand!
5. Don't be offended by the occasional absence of 'please' and thank you' – many individuals are learning English as a second language.
6. Ask the family if it is alright to allow male members of staff to visit a female patient.
7. Check with the family if they are fasting – be aware of the need for flexible meal times.
8. Don't keep offering food and drink if the family are fasting!
9. Don't use utensils or dishes for vegetarian food which have been used for meat.
10. Don't touch religious artefacts that might be in the room without washing your hands; don't place them on the floor or near dirty clothes.

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Sikhism:

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 336,000 persons (less than one per cent of the population).

General Information

The Sikh religion began in North West India, in a region called the Punjab. The first Guru (meaning 'Messenger of God') was Guru Nank Dev Ji (or, Guru Nanak) 1469 - 1539AD. Guru Nanak was born in 1469 in Talwandi (now called Nankana Sahib, near Lahore) at that time in northern India, now in Pakistan. He was born into a Hindu merchant caste family in a region divided between Hindus and Muslims. Trained as an accountant following in his father's footsteps. He and his friends often went to the river to pray. He disappeared for three days. On his return, he kept silent for a day then...

His first words: 'There is neither Hindu nor Muslim, so whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path. God is neither Hindu nor Muslim and the path which I follow is God's.' At age 50 he founded a town in the Punjab called Kartarpur. Many came to live there as his 'sikhs' (disciples), and so it was from then on that his followers were known as Sikhs.

Doctrines

At the start, a fusion of Hinduism and Islam. For example: from Islam -There is one God, present in all things and everyone; from Hinduism – Karma and Reincarnation.

- All are equal – rich and poor, male and female, prince and beggar; all should sit at the same table. The only group within Sikhism held in especial regard are the Khalsa – people who have taken an oath to live their lives as exemplars of Sikh faith and ideals.
- Principles of living: remembering and praying to God at all times; earning a living by honest means; sharing with the poor and needy; selfless service to God and His creation; treating all human beings as equal.
- These principles, aided by the teaching of the Gurus, allow Sikhs to travel towards Nirvana.
- Sikhs do not have a tradition of fasting, pilgrimages or any such rituals. Sikhs do not have clergy.
- There were ten human Gurus chosen by their predecessors. The last human Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, died in 1708. Guru Gobind Singh decided not to appoint a human successor. Instead he said that the collection of hymns, written by six of the Gurus and by Hindu and Muslim teachers, was to become the people's final Guru.
- This book is now known as Guru Granth Sahib. The book is treated with enormous respect and whether it is in the home or in the temple, it normally rests on a special stand and under a canopy.

The Five Ks.

All Sikhs wear five symbols.

- Kesh – uncut hair;
- Kanga – comb;
- Kara – wrist band (reminds that God is one without beginning or end);
- Kirpan – sword (to defend the faith, the poor and the helpless);
- Kaccha (or Kacchera) – short trousers.

The turban is not one of the 5 Ks but it covers the long hair and keeps it in place. Guru Gobind Singh wore a turban and his followers copied him, wishing to be like him in every way.

Only around 2% of people in India are Sikh. However, the distinctive appearance of the men (turban and often full beard and moustache) has made them a symbol of India. Sikhism is the only religion that makes the turban mandatory. In the west, turban wearers are almost always Sikhs.

To sum up

- Believe that God is one and that He is present in all living things.
- Belief that existence is a cycle of birth, death and rebirth, governed by Karma (complex idea but essentially a belief in moral cause and effect).
- Believe that all are equal.
- Believe that people should be free to worship as they wish.
- Final aim is to be reunited with God and freed of the cycle of birth and death.
- The Gurus, the principles of living and the 5 Ks

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Healthcare Implications

Prayer

- Often prayer in the morning, in the evening and finally before sleep but can be up to five times a day.

Diet

- Many Sikhs are vegetarian. Some may not eat eggs or fish.
- A few Sikhs who eat meat will not eat beef, or any meat slaughtered according to Halal or Kosher rites. Sikhs who eat meat will only eat it if it has been killed according to their own rites – known as Jhatka. It is helpful to explain to patients the contents of meals with unfamiliar names (eg 'Hotpot').
- Sikhs do not fast. Sikhs do not smoke or drink alcohol.

Personal Care

- **The 5 Ks**(see above) should never be removed.
Men wear the **hair** long, usually kept in a turban, and do not shave.
- As with other Asian patients, Sikhs prefer to wash in free flowing water, rather than sitting in a bath. They will appreciate the provision of washing water in a toilet or to accompany the use of a bedpan. They will want to wash their hands and rinse their mouths before a meal.

Modesty

- Women will prefer to be examined by female doctors – except in the case of an emergency. Even then a female chaperone should be present.

A note about names

- Most Sikhs have three names: a first – personal - name, a religious middle name and a family name. The religious middle name is always Singh (meaning 'lion') for men, and Kaur (meaning 'Princess') for women. Some Sikhs just use this religious title eg Mr Singh. The wife of 'Mr Singh' is never 'Mrs Singh' but 'Mrs Kaur' and vice versa.
- Generally, Sikhs prefer to be called by their first name, or first name and honorific title.
- In the notes and Palcare it's probably easiest to record the family name as the surname but explain to the patient & family why we are doing this.

Organ Donation

- Permitted

Death and Dying

Care of the Dying

- A dying Sikh may receive comfort from reciting hymns from Guru Granth Sahab (Holy Book). There are no Sikh clergy but there are readers and singers from the Gurdwara (temple) who may be called.

Procedure at death

- Sikhs are happy for non Sikhs to attend to the body although family may want to wash and lay out the body themselves. Do not trim the hair or beard. Eyes and mouth should be closed and limbs straightened with arms placed straight beside the body. The body should be covered with a plain white sheet.
- If the family wishes to view the body, make sure the room is free of religious symbols. Sikhs are always cremated and as soon as possible (usually within 24 hours).

Post Mortem

Generally no problem but, given the belief that the soul is earthbound until the funeral, a delay needs careful explanation.

Worcester Crematorium

Has a dedicated area for specific religions. Tel. 01905 22633

Funeral Director

For most of Worcester city the ethnic minorities seem to use A V Band of Lowesmoor tel. 01905 22048. They are experienced and confident in handling specific religious requirements.

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Hinduism

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 559,000 persons (roughly one per cent of the population).

General Information

The **world's oldest major religion**, Hinduism grew from the traditions of the people who lived in the Indus Valley from about 2500 to 1500 B.C. When the Aryans (Indo-Europeans) invaded this part of India, the two cultures merged. The Aryans brought with them a religion based on oral texts known as the Vedas. These contained hymns and prayers addressed to gods such as Vishnu and Shiva, who would later become chief divinities in Hinduism. Around 900 B.C. the prayers and hymns were recorded in what is considered the oldest and most sacred book of Hindu scriptures, the Rig Veda. Over time, Brahmins, or priests and scholars, dominated the religion. Society was divided into *varna* (groups): *kshatriyas* (rulers and warriors), *vaishyas* (traders and farmers), and *sudras* (menial labourers and servants). From this, perhaps with the existing rules that governed marriage, **a caste system was created**. During lifetimes in these castes, **karma** from a person's deeds determines a cycle of rebirth, or transmigration. **Dharma** (righteous duty or good conduct), is the path to good rebirth. Ascetics (people who deny themselves pleasure) and mystics, as well as others, search for release from the cycle of reincarnation.

Doctrines and Sacred books:

- In the Hindu religion, God has many ways of acting and of being known.
- For example: he creates each new world in the form known as *Brahma*; in the form of *Vishnu* he keeps everything going; when evil threatens, Vishnu fights it. Vishnu has come to Earth ten times in different forms called *avatars*. Two of the best known are *Krishna* and *Rama*; when the world comes to the end of its present life, God as *Shiva* destroys it so that new life can emerge from the ashes of the old.
- God is known in hundreds of other forms too. For example, Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and Ganesha, the elephant headed god of good beginnings.

Sacred books:

- *The Vedas* – the oldest, detailing religious life and duty.
- *The Upanishads* – hymns and poems pondering questions about life, love, creation and suffering.
- *Two epic poems* – *The Ramayana* - the story of the love between Rama and his wife, Sita - set against a backdrop of banishment, exile, war and restoration. *The Mahabharata* - a vast poem about the struggles of two families over many years. The most celebrated part of it is the *Bhagavad Gita* – the Song of the Lord.
- *The Bhagavad Gita* is the teaching of the god Krishna to the nobleman, Arjuna, given just before a battle is to take place. Arjuna questions whether it is right to fight. The song, and the questions it explores, is at the heart of Hindu belief about life and God's love for people.
- Belief that existence is a cycle of birth, death and rebirth, governed by Karma (essentially a belief in moral cause and effect).
- Belief that the soul or life force (*atman* – more usually written as '*athma*') in all living things is connected and that all living things are part of the cycle of birth and rebirth. All life is sacred.
- Belief that all prayers addressed to any form or manifestation will ultimately reach the one God.
- Final aim is to be reunited with God and freed of the cycle of birth and death.
- The Bhagavad Gita prescribes three means of achieving this: *knowledge* – study the scriptures; *yoga* – to deepen meditation; *bhakti* (devotion) to develop a love for God through service.

Worship (Pujah) can take place in a temple (Mandir) or at home, where a temple or shrine exists. Hindus will usually wish to pray twice daily. Where possible incense will be burned and holy books and prayer beads are required. Hindus worship God through different symbolic deities and images used to represent divine qualities. Depending on what a person wants to achieve, they will pray to that particular form – or facet – of the one reality, God. God is symbolised by the word 'Om' or 'Aum'.

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Healthcare Implications

Prayer

Icons, Ganges water, the lighting of oil lamps (or incense), the opportunity to pray and meditate are all likely to be important as death approaches. Being moved to a quiet room will facilitate meditation.

Diet

- Hindus are in the main vegetarian. The cow is a sacred animal so clearly no beef products are acceptable. Some will eat eggs and some won't. Dairy produce is fine so long as it is free of animal fat. Some Hindus will eat only cottage cheese.
- Plates and utensils should be free of possible cross contamination with meat.
- Apart from religious beliefs, there are also cultural issues eg. many Indians believe that it is unwise to take milk or any citrus fruit when suffering from a cough.
- Withdrawal of food and water may raise issues requiring careful discussion. Both are believed to be necessary to achieve a good death.

Fasting

- Fasting is a regular feature of the Hindu religion. The ill are exempt. Fasting may require abstinence from only certain foods. At the end of a period of fasting, visitors may bring in 'prasad' so that the patient can join in the celebration. This will take the form of a small quantity of food perhaps sweets, which have been offered to God in thanksgiving and is now shared among those present.

Personal Care

- Decay is seen as spiritually polluting. Physical emanations like urine, faeces, saliva, menstrual blood, mucous, sweat and semen are considered polluting. Bodily cleanliness is of the highest importance, requiring regular washing and showering.
- Hindus will need water for washing in the toilet. Toilet paper is seen as inadequate.
- Washing in running water is preferred to a bath.
- Indian food is traditionally eaten with the fingers so washing hands before eating is customary. It is regarded as unclean to use the same hand for toileting as is used for eating and performing religious ceremonies.
- Meat is considered impure but family rules may vary.
- Do not touch religious items without permission and then not without washing your hands.

Modesty

- As with all Asian patients, Asian Hindu women will prefer examination by female health care workers.
- In dress, women cover legs, breasts and upper arms. After puberty, many females will not expect to undress fully unless alone. The midriff may sometimes be exposed. Older women may pull a corner of their sari over the head as a sign of modesty in front of strangers. Women may also wear bangles or a thread – these should not be moved without permission.
- Some Hindus wear a red spot on their foreheads or scalp (bindi). This should not be removed or washed off.
- Men generally cover themselves from the waist down. Nudity after adolescence is often considered offensive.

Organ Donation

- Permitted - but some may feel that the absence of organs may result in the soul not being reborn.

Death and Dying

Care of the Dying

- In the last stages of life, relatives may bring money and clothes for the patient to touch before distribution to the needy.
- Relatives will wish to keep a bedside vigil.
- Some will want to sit with the dying patient and read from one of the sacred books.
- In the last stages of life, a Hindu will wish to spend time in prayer and contemplation of the next life, abstaining from sensual pleasures and leading life in a calm and detached way.
- The patient may want to lie on the ground.

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Procedure at death

- After death, the body should be placed on the floor with the head facing north. The body should always be left covered.
- Contact with the body should be avoided as much as possible and mourners may avoid contact with outsiders.
- Some men wear a sacred white thread with three strands. This should not be removed. Men are often cremated with this article.
- Before cremation, the body is washed and wrapped in a white shroud or white clothes. The family will usually want to do this themselves. A young bride may be wrapped in a length of red material.
- Bodies are usually placed in a coffin (in the UK) and a coin may be placed on the forehead and a sacred leaf in the person's mouth.
- Traditionally the eldest son – whatever his age – will take the lead in this, including despatching the body into the flames of the crematorium.
- Traditionally, widows did not remarry. Attitudes are changing and young women are more likely to remarry.

Post Mortem

If legally necessary. Ideally, organs should be returned to the body.

Worcester Crematorium

Has a dedicated area for specific religions. Tel. 01905 22633

Funeral Director

For most of Worcester city the ethnic minorities seem to use A V Band of Lowesmoor tel. 01905 22048. They are experienced and confident in handling specific religious requirements

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Judaism

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 267,000 persons (less than one per cent of the population).

General Information:

- Judaism is an ancient religion that has been practised for over 5000 years.
- It is based on belief in one God.
- God has a special relationship (Covenant) with His people.
- Jews are called to be faithful and to live by God's Laws.
- They anticipate the coming of a Messiah who will usher in a reign of peace, fruitfulness and security for the whole world.
- 'Covenant' Means solemn agreement.
- The Bible tells how nearly 4000 years ago, God made a promise to Abraham and his successors, 'I will be your God and you will be my people.'
- God repeated this promise to Abraham's son, Isaac, and to Isaac's son, Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. He had twelve sons - the beginning of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Many Jewish festivals are concerned with celebrating elements of the unfolding of the special relationship between God and 'the children of Israel'.
- The year 2000AD was year 5,760 by the Jewish Calendar.
- At the festival of Pesach or Passover, the youngest child in the family asks, 'Why is this night different from any other?'
- The story of Exodus.
- The Torah – given on Mount Sinai to Moses.
- The Scriptures are referred to (rather tactlessly) by Christians as, 'The Old Testament'. The most important part is the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy). Supplemented by The Prophets and The Psalms.
- After years of wandering, the Jews reached a land near the Jordan. It became known as the land of Israel.
- Ruled initially by Judges, eventually it became a Kingdom under first, David (c1000BC), then his son, Solomon.
- 721BC fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel)
- 586BC fall of the Southern Kingdom (Judah)
- Free again in 160BC but conquered by the Romans.
- AD66 final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.
- Not until 1948 did the Jews acquire national sovereignty again.
- Daily life is based on the Laws given to Moses.
- Orthodox Jews (When compared with Liberal, or Reformed, Jews) tend to be more traditional and rigorous around dietary laws.
- There is gender separation (at least in worship) amongst Orthodox Jews. Whereas both genders worship together in Liberal Judaism.

Healthcare Considerations:

Diet & Fasting

- Many Jews will ask for Kosher food
- Shellfish, pork, rabbit and derivatives are strictly prohibited (treifu). Milk and Meat products are not eaten in the same meal eg. No creamy pudding after a meat main course and no butter on a meat sandwich. Wild birds are forbidden.
- A kosher household will keep meat and milk utensils, crockery and cutlery strictly separate.
- Orthodox Jews may not be happy to take non Kosher medication.
- Fasting occurs in minor festivals throughout the year, but the prominent fast which nearly all Jews observe is Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) in late September/ October. Holiest day of the Jewish calendar. Orthodox patients will require alternatives to oral medication.

Personal Care

- The Sabbath (Shabbat) begins at sunset on Friday and lasts until sunset on Saturday. During this time, work is prohibited (this includes writing, travelling and switching on lights or electrical appliances).
- Washing & Toilet – washing of hands and a blessing is required before eating. Some orthodox Jews do not bathe or shower during major festivals or the Sabbath. Some men prefer to be bearded or will only use an electric razor.
- Orthodox Jewish women keep their bodies and limbs covered. They may also wear a headscarf or wig – these should only be removed if medically necessary.

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- Modesty – generally indistinguishable from the majority female population but in Orthodox Judaism touch between men and women is forbidden unless married – same sex health care will be preferred.
- Orthodox men keep their head covered with a hat or skull cap (Kappel).

Organ Donation

- Orthodox Jews usually forbid organ transplants

Death and Dying

Care of the Dying

- The patient may wish to hear or recite Psalms (sacred songs) and may appreciate being able to hold the page on which it is written.
- Prayers may be said by the relatives.
- The relatives may wish to call a rabbi to hear confession and bring comfort.

At death

- In some cases, the son or nearest relative will want to close the mouth and eyes.
- The body should be handled as little as possible by non Jews and they should wear gloves.
- Depending on the sex of the patient, a fellow male or fellow female washes and prepares the body for burial. If no family are present, even the most orthodox Jews will be happy for hospice staff to wash and prepare the body.
- The body should be covered with a clean, white sheet.
- The family may want the body placed with the feet towards the doorway and to light a candle.
- Burial (no cremation) usually takes place 24 hours after death.
- Some orthodox groups may appoint a 'Watcher' to sit with the body during that period.
- No religious symbols should be on display in the room where the body is placed.

Post Mortem

If legally necessary.

Burial Ground

Jewish burial ground – none in Worcester.

Funeral Director

Jewish Community provide their own funeral planning. The Rabbi or the Burial Society will step in and make all necessary arrangements, including the burial.

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BUDDHISM

Numbers: 2001 Census, UK adherents 152,000 (less than one per cent of the population).

General Information:

- How do we begin to tell the story of the man who came to be called the Buddha?
- Although an historic figure, in another sense his life as an individual never really began for he was, like all of us, in the Buddhist view, a beginningless wayfarer in the round of samsara (the cycle of death and rebirth in Buddhist teaching).
- Legend and reality become confused in the stories of many great religious teachers. The Jakata tales tell of his previous births.
- Born around 586 BC and named Siddharta Gautama.
- Born in a period of rapid economic growth in the developing region around the Ganges.
- His father, Suddhodana was a ruler among the people known as the Sakyas. His mother was Mahamaya. Mahamaya had borne other children but it is said that Siddharta's birth was miraculous, by a sort of auto conception. Birth occurred at the time of the full moon in May at a park called Lumbini.
- He was raised in luxury and married, becoming the father of a son.
- But then he changed
- He had been struck by the four sights of a very old man, a sick person, a corpse being taken to the burning ground and a holy beggar.
- He left his family in answer to this powerful inner compulsion. After a period of severe austerity and reflection, at a place called Bodh-Gaya, he attained full insight into the nature of the world.
- The Sermon of the Turning Wheel – in which he expounded his insight to his companions. They became his first disciples and formed the basis of the Sangha (the Buddhist order of monks).
- He travelled for 45 years until he was 80 consolidating the organisation of the Sangha.
- He died in peace. He will not be reborn, having overcome the forces of death. His disciples cremated his body.

Doctrines

- Meditation without understanding is blind; understanding without meditation produces no fruits. The two have to be combined within a 'right orientation'.
- Everything is impermanent (including the individual – there is no individual soul – ref. one candle lit from another) and interdependent.
- We are free to reshape our destinies.
- Nothing is permanent, no satisfaction can last for ever, and its disappearance is painful. This is the first of the Four Noble Truths. The second is that the cause of suffering is craving for existence. The third is that this cause can be eliminated. The fourth is that the means of doing this is by treading the Noble Eightfold Path.
- The path has eight aspects and is an expansion of a more fundamental idea – that there are three elements in the Way (trust, ethical conduct and meditation).
- The first two concern Trust – Right Belief and Right Action.
- The next three concern ethical behaviour – Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, Right Livelihood.
- The last three are to do with yoga or self training – Right Effort, Right Self Awareness, Right Meditation.
- This path leads to a state in this life of serenity and complete insight, which the Buddha called Enlightenment.
- At death the saint disappears like a spark going out in the darkness. It is not extinction but nor is it continued individual existence either. The best way to point to this transcendent condition is silence.

To sum up

- The idea of impermanence; the rejection of a permanent soul in the individual, the concept of universal causation and the goal of the ultimate state of nirvana (final liberation from rebirth) are the bare bones of the Buddha's teaching.
- The Buddha, The Sangha and The Dharma are the Three Jewels pointing to the practical path of spiritual awakening and the goal of nirvana.

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Healthcare Considerations:

There are different schools of Buddhist thought and practise. For most Buddhists the following will be the chief considerations:

Diet & Fasting

- Buddhists are usually vegetarian resulting from the principle of 'Non harming'. Meals will vary according to country of origin.
- Fasting is unusual in anyone other than Theravaden monks who do not eat after midday.

Festivals

- Festivals include Buddha's birthday, death day, enlightenment, first sermon etc..

Personal care

- There are no particular rules about ablutions or modesty. Cultural variations apply.

Organ Donation

- Blood transfusion and organ donation are permitted.

Death and Dying

Care of the Dying

- The state of mind at the time of death is crucial to how they will experience the intermediate states and, thereafter, the character of rebirth.
- Nearing death, the state of mind should be one of peace. A Buddhist practitioner may chant to aid purification. The patient may ask for a quiet place to meditate. They may wish for a figure of Buddha nearby and may use a candle or incense stick. Some literature says that home death is often preferred. Others advise to the contrary. It may be an issue of the ability to create a peaceful environment.

At death

- After death, in many schools of Buddhism there is no ritual requirement and normal hospice procedures are accepted. However, some Buddhists hold strong views on how the body should be treated after death.
- After death, the main tradition is for the family to request prayers from the Sangha of the appropriate school.
- A Buddhist priest (ideally of the same school) should be contacted as soon as possible.
- Ideally the body should not be moved before they arrive to say prayers. Prayers can sometimes be recited at a distance e.g. in the Temple.
- For some schools common in Britain, an experienced practitioner may be asked to perform the rite of Powa (ejection of consciousness).
- Some relatives may require a 72 hour period for the optimal dissolution of consciousness. In Tibetan Buddhism there were occasions for keeping the body for 49 days of daily prayer.
- Most Buddhists are cremated within 3 to 7 days.

Post mortem

- Attitudes vary

The Tibetan Book of the Dead – a Postscript

- Derives from a Tibetan tradition of how the consciousness of self dissolves before being born into the next life.
- Written in the Tenth century.
- Describes the stages of the process of dissolution.
- Includes a description of figures (deities) that will be met and colours that will draw you. It even describes the process of being led over countries where the dharma is strong so that you will be born anew into sympathetic environments.
- The book is chanted to the dying to allow people to remain on the right path.

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