Quick Reference Sheet for Native American Indian

-Caution on Stereotyping-

Background:

While generalizations may be possible, each tribe may have diverse beliefs.

Cultural variance between tribes include:
- Values
- Customs
- Traditions

1924 - Recognized as U.S. citizens.

Currently, many Native American Indian live on reservations or trust land designated by the federal government, as well as in general society.

Statistics:

Population as of 2007: about 4.5 million (1.5% of total population).

There are over 500 Federally recognized tribes.

Largest Native American Indian populations are in California, Oklahoma, and Arizona.

Social Structure:

Extended families are very important.

Depending on the tribe, families could include:
- Actual blood relatives
- Clan members
- The community as a whole

Beliefs/Values:

Loyalty and support of extended family are highly valued.

Extended family is often involved in decision making.

Respect for the aged is expected.

Nature, and its preservation, is of utmost important.

Rituals and traditional ceremonies may be a part of everyday life.
Beliefs
  Supreme creator (possibly other spiritual figures)

  Humans = body+mind+spirit

  Every part of nature (living and non-living) is sacred and has a spirit

  Each tribe has specific beliefs for the afterlife

  Handshake in greeting is acceptable

  Holding direct eye gaze may be seen as disrespectful

  Allow for response, as interruptions may be viewed as disrespectful

  “Thank you” is often implied instead of being stated

  Maintaining composure and not showing emotion may be respected cultural traits

  Preferred personal space is at least as much used in Western culture (2 ft.)

  Present oriented - may not see a problem in arriving 10-15 minutes late, since they will accomplish everything

  The supreme being will control every aspect of the human environment - for example, if faced with a terminal illness, many Native American Indians would not want to prolong life

Please see the following PowerPoints for further details:
Native American Indian – Clinical Provider

Native American Indian – General