

The graphic features a central dark blue circle containing the text 'UIC' in light blue. This circle is surrounded by a yellow ring, which is further enclosed by a red ring. Four thick lines radiate from the center: a yellow line pointing up and right, a red line pointing up and left, a yellow line pointing down, and a red line pointing down and right. The background is a solid light blue.

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Food and Health: Immersing in Culture to Improve Nutrition Interventions

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Why Are We Here?

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Using a Cultural Lens to Improve Health



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Providing Culturally Appropriate Interventions





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What Is Ethnography?



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How Do You Learn about Other Cultures?



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Practical Ethnographic Strategies

Increase	Increase the diversity of your social circles
Immerse	Immerse yourself in local culture when travelling
Visit	Visit a wide range of diverse local events
Ask	Don't make assumptions, ask questions
Advocate	Advocate for shared decision making
Read	Read material developed by cultural experts
Employ	Employ diverse employees with lived experience
Partner	Form community advisory groups and partnerships
Share	Fund ethnographic research and share data with staff

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THE **OTHER** WATER BUCKET CHALLENGE :





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Public Health Nutrition Example 1

Setting:	Medellín, Colombia: two schools
Study Aim:	Identify changes in school meal programs over time and explore the perceptions of key stakeholders
Participants:	Schoolchildren, parents, program coordinators, nutritionists, public officials
Data Collection:	Interviews (individual and group), observation, document analyses
Results:	School meal programs do not always consider sociocultural aspects of food, such as taste preferences, mealtime environment, and meanings attached to food
Implications:	Integrate sociocultural dimensions of food into the design and delivery of school meal programs



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Public Health Nutrition Example 2

Setting:	Central Australia: remote Aboriginal settlement
Study Aim:	Understand day to day diabetes management to inform culturally sensitive health promotion programs
Participants:	Aboriginal adults with diabetes, families, and medical staff
Data Collection:	Observation, interviews (semi structured, in-depth), informal conversations
Results:	Poor access to resources facilitating diabetes management such as appropriate food and shifting between different care regimens
Implications:	Long-term health promotion programs need to be culturally sensitive and rely on realistic collaborations between patients, families, and health care providers



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Public Health Nutrition Example 3

Setting:	Worldwide: Twitter
Study Aim:	Understand beliefs about carbohydrate intake and eating patterns related to carbophobia
Participants:	Amateur athletes
Data Collection:	Observation
Results:	Carbophobia viewed as a lifestyle; recent love-hate relationship with carbohydrates evident
Implications:	Recognize the role of social media in promoting and maintaining eating behaviors, and utilize communication platforms to inform effective interventions



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Clinical Nutrition Example 1

Setting:	Texas-Mexico border, USA: rural community
Study Aim:	Explore diabetes management within sociocultural context
Participants:	Low-income Hispanic women with type 2 diabetes for 10 years or more
Data Collection:	Observation, interviews
Results:	Sociocultural environment influences diabetes management and traditional foodways are important and should be maintained through dietary balance
Implications:	Develop diabetes guidance within sociocultural contexts and traditional foodways to improve patient outcomes



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Food Service Example 1

Setting:	UK: charitable food aid organization in day center of major city
Study Aim:	Understand factors influencing menus and acceptability of menu changes in charitable meal service setting
Participants:	Kitchen staff and clients
Data Collection:	Observation, interviews
Results:	Menu composition dependent on budget, food availability, and client preferences; Antipathy toward menu changes with staff having limited knowledge of healthy eating
Implications:	Consider kitchen capabilities and staff attitudes toward change for menu development



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Conclusion

- Designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions requires knowledge about populations and communities.
- Obtain emic perspectives and analyze them in relation to cultural, economic, and structural features of social organization.
- Ethnography provides important insights for determining how best to tailor aspects of program design and implementation.
- There are effective ethnographic strategies that individuals and organizations can use to better understand populations.



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What Are You Going to Do Differently?



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