

POCKET GUIDE TO

# Spanish for the Nutrition Professional

THIRD EDITION

**Peggy Durbala**

MA

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MPH, RD, LDN, CPXP

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**Spanish for  
the Nutrition  
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*Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Chicago, IL*

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# Foreword

In the profession of dietetics, we speak of competencies and level of proficiency. While I am proficient in many domains in dietetics, when it comes to the ability to communicate with Hispanic and Latino clients or colleagues, I am definitely a novice. A few greetings, simple phrases, and requesting expense accounts in Spanish (which I learned when I was LAHIDAN Treasurer) encompass my bilingual skills.

Tools like the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Pocket Guide to Spanish for the Nutrition Professional*, Third Edition, are invaluable resources for dietetics practitioners to provide culturally sensitive nutrition care for their Spanish-speaking clients. This concise and straightforward guide enables anyone to become more comfortable with conversational Spanish related to food, nutrition, eating, and health and be more aware of Hispanic/Latino culture. The third edition of the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Pocket Guide to Spanish for the Nutrition Professional* promises to be an excellent resource, much like previous editions. This new edition presents additional words, phrases, and updated

evidence-based material related to culture and counseling. Central American foods and cultural components have also been added. The three sections, Section I: Culturally Sensitive Nutrition Care of Spanish-speaking clients, Section II: Spanish Grammar and Vocabulary for the Nutrition Professional, and Section III: Nutrition Care Education and Resources provide the user with invaluable and comprehensive information to help practitioners assess the individual's food and nutrition needs and beliefs. The third edition comes with downloadable food cards with Spanish pronunciation and standard serving sizes to use as a visual aid in counseling and can also be used for practitioners to practice their Spanish skills. A diagram showing the names and pronunciation key for body parts has been expanded to include more body parts and organs.

This book is a service to the members of the Academy as well as other health care providers. Anyone looking for an accurate and thorough text on the Hispanic/Latino culture and how to communicate effectively in Spanish will find this handbook a key tool in their care of the Spanish-speaking client.

**Margaret Cook-Newell PhD, RDN, LD, CN**

*Chair, Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition (LAHIDAN)*

*A Member Interest Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*

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I would also especially like to thank Mary Jo Kurko for collaborating with me to bring this publication to fruition and my husband, Matt Durbala, for his support and encouragement of me in this endeavor and so many others.

*Peggy A. Batty-Durbala*

Since the first edition of *Spanish for the Nutrition Professional*, I've been gratified to see the increase in interest and research in health literacy, cultural competence, and new techniques in interviewing and counseling. I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this valuable resource and to renew my friendship with Peggy

Batty-Durbala in the process. Thanks to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for seeing the value in revising and improving the book.

I would also like to thank my daughters, Maggie and Annie, who continue to support me with this and many other projects. Thanks, too, to my wonderful, bilingual grandchildren, Nicholas and Zoe, whose Spanish “lessons” have taught me more than any academic course.

*Mary Jo Kurko, MPH, RD, LDN*

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# Section I

## Culturally Sensitive Nutrition Care of Spanish- Speaking Clients

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## CHAPTER 1

# Latino Culture

## Hispanic/Latino Diversity

The term *Hispanic* is an ethnic category that denotes neither race nor color. Although the term is widely used, many members of the Hispanic population prefer the term *Latino*. The US Census Bureau considers the terms interchangeable; the 2010 census categories of Hispanic origins listed Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano; Puerto Rican; Cuban; and Other.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the common use of the Spanish language and cultural similarities, there is tremendous variety within the Latino community. Latinos in the United States are stereotypically thought of as Mexicans (in California, Texas, Illinois, and Arizona), as Puerto Ricans (in New York, New Jersey, and the East Coast), or as Cubans (in Florida). However, the community also includes people from the Caribbean, Central America, South America,

as well as individuals in the Southwest who were born in the United States but whose ancestors were Spanish.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Census Bureau, as of July 1, 2015, Hispanics/Latinos comprise about 17.6% (56.6 million individuals) of the US population. Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, and the population is expected to increase to 28.6% (119 million) by 2060.<sup>2</sup> Because only 4% of the dietetics profession identifies as Hispanic/Latino, counseling Latino clients can be a challenge for nutrition and dietetics professionals.<sup>3</sup> Most registered dietitian nutritionists will be counseling members of a cultural group that differs from their own.

## Basic Cultural Factors

Cultural competency is an essential skill for nutrition professionals. To provide appropriate care to Latino clients, nutrition and dietetics professionals must first understand Latino culture. Although there are differences among these cultures, similarities include the Spanish language, importance of family, and religious faith.<sup>4</sup>

The Latino family may include parents, their children, grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles, godparents, and close family friends. The father is often the “head of the family,” and the mother is usually responsible for the home. Family members feel responsibility for one another, especially for those with health problems. Therefore, it is not unusual for family members to

accompany the client to nutrition counseling. If this is the case, keep in mind that it is common for the father to make health decisions for other family members.<sup>5</sup>

Religion may be another factor for the nutrition professional to consider in the decision-making process. The church is often part of daily family and community life (many Latinos are Catholic) and plays an even greater role in times of illness.<sup>5</sup>

Although most Latinos speak Spanish, there are numerous dialects used within the community. Individuals from different countries (or different areas of the same country) may not share the same meaning of a particular word. Some immigrants, especially those from parts of Mexico and Central America, may speak a native language other than Spanish. Despite the differences in vocabulary, most Spanish-speaking Latinos have no difficulty conversing with each other. Young people who have been raised in the United States commonly use a mix of Spanish and English.

Difficulty in accessing and using the health care system in the United States is a significant problem for many Latinos, especially those of lower socioeconomic status. Language barriers, a low rate of medical insurance coverage, the lack of transportation to and from clinics and hospitals, and low incomes are just a few factors that contribute to difficulty in accessing services.<sup>6</sup>

## Potential Differences Among Cultural Groups

Nutrition professionals should consider potential differences among cultural groups when conducting a cross-cultural counseling session. These differences include:

- **Socioeconomic and environmental factors** Socioeconomic issues (including legal status) and environmental risks can affect health and treatment and influence a client's attitudes, beliefs, and values.
- **Language** New immigrants are likely to speak only Spanish. Furthermore, many Latinos who speak and understand spoken English cannot read or write that language. Parents who cannot speak English may ask their children to translate; however, this is not appropriate in medical discussions. A trained interpreter should be used (see Chapter 4).
- **Family structure and social values** Western medicine makes an individual responsible for his or her health care. The Latino culture of extended family invites collective decision making, which is likely to involve the head of the household. Strong traditional gender roles (eg, the mother is responsible for cooking and feeding the family) may lead women to perceive the changes suggested in nutrition counseling negatively.

- **Cultural food practices** Food behaviors that are reflective of the Latino culture (such as food preferences, food preparation, eating patterns, and foods used as medicine or to promote health) are most evident in recent immigrants, but some cultural behaviors persist for generations.
- **Health care values, beliefs, and practices** Although Western cultures rely on science to explain illness and treat disease, some members of different Latino cultures focus on the spiritual causes of illness.
- **Attitudes toward health care providers** Some Latinos (especially men) may feel that seeking medical attention is a sign of weakness. They may solicit a health care provider's assistance only after a disease has progressed—not for preventive care or natural processes like pregnancy. Also, some Latinos may use home remedies for an illness before visiting a physician and they may be more likely to follow the advice of a relative or neighbor than a health professional.<sup>6,7</sup>
- **Nutrition professional designation** The vocabulary for nutrition professionals varies by country or region. In this book, the registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) title is referred to as *Nutricionista*. However, other terms may be used elsewhere, for example, *Dietista Nutricionista Registrado*, *Nutriólogo* (commonly used in Mexico), *Nutricionista–Dietista Registrada* (used in Columbia), or *Dietista* (in Mexico, this term refers to dietetic technician).

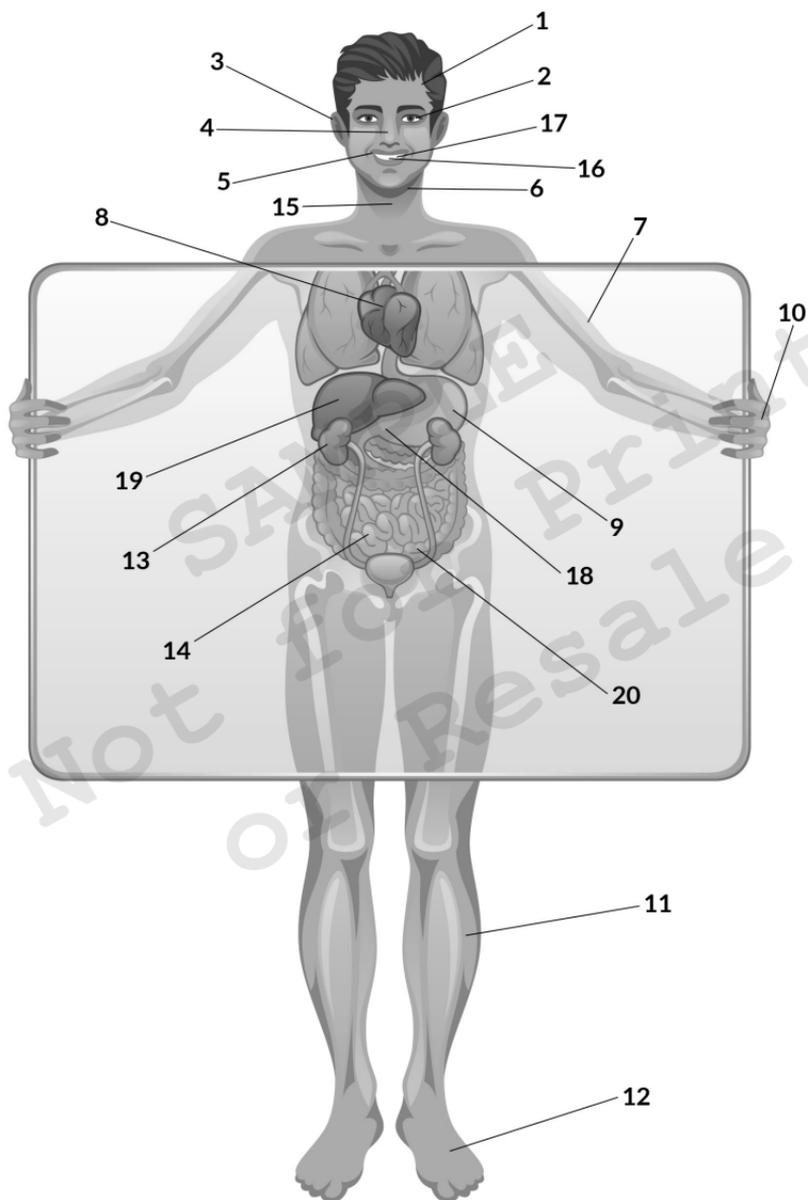
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## APPENDIX A

# Spanish Vocabulary for Body Parts

<b>English</b>	<b>Español</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>
1. head	<i>cabeza</i>	ka-BEH-sah
2. eye	<i>ojo</i>	OH-hoh
3. ear	<i>oreja</i>	oh-REH-hah
4. nose	<i>nariz</i>	nah-REES
5. mouth	<i>boca</i>	BOH-kah
6. throat	<i>garganta</i>	gahr-GAHN-tah
7. arm	<i>brazo</i>	BRAH-soh
8. heart	<i>corazón</i>	koh-rah-SOHN
9. stomach	<i>estómago</i>	ehs-TOH-mah-goh
10. hand	<i>mano</i>	MAH-noh
11. leg	<i>pierna</i>	pee-EHR-nah
12. foot	<i>pie</i>	pee-EH
13. kidney	<i>riñón</i>	rreen-YOHN
14. intestine	<i>intestino</i>	in-tehs-TEE-noh
15. esophagus	<i>esófago</i>	eh-SOH-fah-goh
16. tongue	<i>lengua</i>	LEHN-gwah
17. teeth	<i>dientes</i>	dee-EHN-tehs
18. pancreas	<i>páncreas</i>	PAHN-kree-ahs
19. liver	<i>hígado</i>	EEH-gah-thoh
20. colon	<i>colón</i>	koh-LOHN
	<i>intestino grueso</i>	ihn-tehs-TEE-noh groo-EH-soh



## APPENDIX D

# Spanish to English Glossary



*Some Spanish adjectives can end in either the letter “o” or “a,” depending on the gender of the noun that the adjective modifies. These are represented in this appendix with a slash between the oh and ah sound. For example:*

*boiled hervido/a ehr-BEE-thoh/thah*

*See chapter 7 for more details.*

## Numeros

<i>cero</i>	<i>SEH-roh</i>	<i>zero</i>
<i>uno</i>	<i>OO-noh</i>	<i>one</i>
<i>dos</i>	<i>dohs</i>	<i>two</i>

<i>tres</i>	trehs	three
<i>cuatro</i>	KWAH-troh	four
<i>cinco</i>	SEEN-koh	five
<i>seis</i>	SEH-ees	six
<i>siete</i>	see-EH-teh	seven
<i>ocho</i>	OH-choh	eight
<i>nueve</i>	noo-EH-beh	nine
<i>diez</i>	dee-ehs	ten
<i>once</i>	OHN-seh	eleven
<i>doce</i>	DOH-seh	twelve
<i>trece</i>	TREH-seh	thirteen
<i>catorce</i>	kah-TOHR-seh	fourteen
<i>quince</i>	KEEN-seh	fifteen
<i>veinte</i>	BEHN-teh	twenty
<i>treinta</i>	TREHN-tah	thirty
<i>cuarenta</i>	kwah-REHN-tah	forty
<i>cincuenta</i>	seen-KWEHN-tah	fifty
<i>sesenta</i>	seh-SEHN-tah	sixty
<i>setenta</i>	seh-TEHN-tah	seventy
<i>ochenta</i>	oh-CHEHN-tah	eighty

<i>noventa</i>	noh-BEHN-tah	ninety
<i>cien</i>	see-EHN	one hundred
<i>ciento</i>	see-EHN-toh	
<i>doscientos</i>	dohs-see-EHN-tohs	two hundred
<i>trescientos</i>	trehs-see-EHN-tohs	three hundred
<i>cuatrocientos</i>	kwah-troh-see-EHN-tohs	four hundred
<i>quinientos</i>	kee-nee-YEHN-tohs	five hundred
<i>seiscientos</i>	see-ehs-see-EHN-tohs	six hundred
<i>setecientos</i>	seh-teh-see-EHN-tohs	seven hundred
<i>ochocientos</i>	oh-choh-see-EHN-tohs	eight hundred
<i>novcientos</i>	noh-beh-see-EHN-tohs	nine hundred
<i>mil</i>	meel	one thousand
<i>dos mil</i>	dohs meel	two thousand
<i>tres mil</i>	trehs meel	three thousand

## A

<i>a la parrilla</i>	ah lah pah-RREE-yah	broiled
<i>aceite</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh	oil
<i>aceite de canola</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh deh kah-NOH-lah	canola oil

<i>aceite de maíz</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh deh mah-EES	corn oil
<i>aceite de oliva</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh deh oh-LEE-bah	olive oil
<i>aceite de soya</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh deh SOH-yah	soybean oil
<i>aceite vegetal hidrogenado</i>	ah-SEH-ee-teh beh-heh-TAHL ee-droh-heh-NAH-thoh	margarine
<i>achiote</i>	ah-chee-YOH-teh	achiote (seasoning paste made from annatto seeds)
<i>acidéz</i>	ah-see-THEHS	heartburn acid reflux
<i>ácido fólico</i>	AH-see-thoh FOH-lee-koh	folic acid
<i>aderezo</i>	ah-deh-REH-soh	salad dressing
<i>agua</i>	AH-gwah	water
<i>agua con gas</i>	AH-gwah kohn GAHS	sparkling water
<i>agua de sabor</i>	AH-gwah deh sah-BOR	flavored water

<i>agua gasificada</i>	AH-gwah gah-see-fee- KAH-thah	sparkling water
<i>agua mineral</i>	AH-gwah mee-neh-RAHL	mineral water  sparkling water
<i>agua saborizada</i>	AH-gwah sah-boh-ree- SAH-thah	flavored water
<i>aguacate</i>	ah-gwah-KAH-teh	avocado
<i>aji verde</i>	ah-HEE BEHR-deh	green bell pepper
<i>ajíes rellenos</i>	ah-HEE-yehs rreh-YEH-nohs	peppers, stuffed
<i>ajo</i>	AH-hoh	garlic
<i>al carbón</i>	ahl kahr-BOHN	barbecued meat
<i>al horno</i>	ahl OHR-noh	baked
<i>al vapor</i>	ahl bah-POHR	steamed
<i>albaricoque</i>	ahl-bah-ree-KOH-keh	apricot
<i>albóndigas</i>	ahl-BOHN-dee-gahs	meatballs
<i>alergia al gluten</i>	ah-LEHR-hee-ah ahl GLOO-tehn	gluten allergy

<i>aliño</i>	ah-LEEN-yoh	salad dressing
<i>almejas</i>	ahl-MEH-hahs	clams
<i>almendras</i>	ahl-MEHN-drahs	almonds
<i>almíbar</i>	ahl-MEE-bahr	syrup
<i>almuerzo</i>	ahl-MWEHR-soh	lunch
<i>alta presión</i>	AHL-tah preh-see-OHN	high blood pressure
<i>anacardos</i>	ah-nah-KAHR-thos	cashews
<i>ananá</i>	ah-nah-NAH	pineapple
<i>anemia</i>	ah-NEH-mee-ah	anemia
<i>anorético/a</i>	ah-noh-REK-see-koh/kah	anorexic
<i>antojito</i>	ahn-toh-HEE-toh	appetizer
<i>aperitivo</i>	ah-peh-ree-TEE-boh	appetizer
<i>apio</i>	AH-pee-oh	celery
<i>aproximadamente</i>	ah-PROHK-see-mah-thah MEHN-teh	approximately
<i>arándanos (azules)</i>	ah-RAHN-dah-nohs (ah-SOO-lehs)	blueberries
<i>arándanos rojos (y agrios)</i>	ah-RAHN-dah-nohs RROH- hohs (ee AH-gree-ohs)	cranberries

<i>arroz</i>	ah-RROHS	rice
<i>arroz blanco</i>	ah-RROHS BLAHN-koh	white rice
<i>arroz integral</i>	ah-RROHS een-teh-GRAHL	brown rice
<i>arroz moreno</i>	ah-RROHS moh-REH-noh	brown rice
<i>arroz salvaje</i>	ah-RROHS sahl-BAH-heh	wild rice
<i>arroz silvestre</i>	ah-RROHS seel-BEHS-treh	wild rice
<i>asado/a</i>	ah-SAH-thoh/thah	grilled
<i>ate</i>	AH-the	jelly
<i>atún</i>	ah-TOON	tuna
<i>avellanas</i>	ah-beh-YEHN-ahs	hazelnuts
<i>avena</i>	ah-BEH-nah	oatmeal oats
<i>azúcar</i>	ah-SOO-kahr	sugar
<i>azúcar morena</i>	ah-SOO-kahr moh-REH-nah	sugar, brown or light brown
<i>azúcar negra</i>	ah-SOO-kahr NEH-grah	sugar, dark brown, unrefined
<i>azúcar rubia</i>	ah-SOO-kahr RROO-bee-yah	sugar, brown or light brown
<i>azúcares</i>	ah-SOO-kah-rehs	sugar

POCKET GUIDE TO  
**Spanish for the Nutrition Professional**  
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This updated and enhanced third edition is designed to help readers become more comfortable with conversational Spanish related to food, nutrition, eating, and health and to improve understanding of the Latino culture. Highlights include:

- Section I provides updated evidence-based material related to culturally sensitive nutrition care of Spanish-speaking clients, including differences in beliefs, dietary habits, and health profiles and tips for effective communication.
- Section II offers a comprehensive and expanded dictionary of Spanish grammar and vocabulary for words and phrases related to food, nutrition, eating, and health. New to this edition are Central American foods and cultural components.
- Section III addresses health literacy and nutrition education guidelines and resources for designing, selecting, or adapting materials for non-English speaking clients.
- New to this edition—downloadable color food cards with Spanish pronunciation and standard serving sizes to use as a visual aid in counseling or for practitioners to practice their Spanish skills.

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