

child's current health status and potential effects on other medical treatment regimens.

3. Give the family their penny and open a dialog about the traditional practice they are using. Additional information should be gathered in a nonjudgmental manner, and the discussion should center on the family's traditional beliefs regarding the practices, the prescribed medical regimen, and whether there is a conflict or potential for harm. There is no need to stop the treatment unless potential harm to the child may occur. A discussion with the primary practitioner regarding the use of CAM for Maria should ensue followed by a discussion with the entire family, if necessary. The contents of the bottle will more than likely be revealed during the discussion with the family. It is important to respect the family's wishes regarding traditional folk or CAM rituals yet remain mindful of potential harmful effects on the child. It is not likely that telling the family to stop the ritual will be successful because these beliefs are deeply ingrained into cultural, religious, and medical practice; the family is more likely to continue the ritual at home on discharge and further disregard other instructions for care if a confrontational approach is adopted by the nursing and medical staff. The important concept for the staff and family to focus on is the ultimate well-being of the child. What you have probably observed is Santeria, the African-Caribbean religion that was brought to the New World by slaves from West Africa. It is common among immigrants from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and Santo Domingo, and it is believed that a majority of Latin American immigrants will have contact with Santeria sometime in their lives.

4. As yet, there is insufficient evidence to indicate that harm is being done by the CAM ritual. Further data need to be gathered, and then a decision about further discussion of the CAM practice may occur.

Playroom and Hospital Procedures

1. Evidence: Yes, there is sufficient evidence regarding this incident to draw some conclusions.