



1123: St. Bartholomew's hospital opened in London

1347-1352: Black Death Outbreak

1455: Printing Press Invented

1348: Black Death Reaches England

1250

1500

The Four Humours



Miasma



WHAT DID THEY THINK CAUSED ILLNESS?

Astrology



Fatalism



IDEAS in the Middle Ages had a strong emphasis on the supernatural with the Church encouraging people to believe that illness was the result of sinful behaviour (fatalism) rather than trying to explain with science. Despite this, the Church did support the idea known as the Four Humours, in which Galen and Hippocrates were key figures, as Galen argued that the body was created by a divine spirit. A final idea linked to the Church was miasma which supported the idea of spiritual cleanliness.

DIAGNOSING illness in the period was built around the idea of the Four Humours, with illness being the result of humours being out of balance. Additionally, astrology was used to diagnose illness by using an almanac to investigate the position of the stars to determine illness. One final method saw doctors check the colour, smell and taste of urine to determine certain illnesses.

TREATING SICKNESS

physicians



PHYSICIANS received 7 years of training in Church controlled university that focused on the work of Galen and saw dissection banned. They would then go on to treat the wealthiest but only 100 worked in England in 1300!

barber-surgeons



Learning by doing, **BARBER SURGEONS** undertook apprenticeships and used a 'wound man' diagram to guide them as they did simple surgeries such as bleeding and amputations.

wise women



WOMEN, living in their local community, knew lots of herbal remedies and were responsible for treating the family, including roles like midwives.

hospitals



HOSPITALS existed but they were very different to today. They were run by the Church and charities, with a primary focus being on offering care to travellers and the elderly, not the sick!

herbal remedies



Probably the main treatment, herbal remedies were brought from **APOTHECARIES** and were commonly used to treat illness. They contained natural ingredients, such as honey, and some elements of prayer.

bleeding/purging



Bleeding and purging were also commonly used by physicians. If the humours were imbalanced, this was key to re-aligning them.

PREVENTING SICKNESS

Human and animal waste was a massive issue for many towns. Many simply threw waste onto the streets and animal dung was commonly found — both mingled with the mud to create a less than hygienic environment.



To solve this, many employed street cleaners and some, like Newcastle, paved the streets in stone. Other towns employed night carts to collect human waste, whilst rules were introduced about locations for building private latrines (toilets).

Along with normal waste, it was also common for workers to simply chuck their waste onto streets. This meant butcher's tossed animal entrails whilst textile workers dumped dyes and chemicals.



Many towns passed laws that made it punishable to dispose of work waste on the street, instead requiring them to place it in cesspits on the outskirts of settlements.



All this waste meant that riverways and streams were often filthy around towns. Some, like Gloucester, built lead pipes to bring in clean water and reduce contamination.

HOW DID FACTORS INFLUENCE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT?

THE CHURCH



Dominated life with tight control over what was learnt, information and society all enforced through the concept of religious punishment. They did provide universities for medical training as well as hospitals, however, it was based on incorrect ideas and mainly focused on travellers and the elderly.

EDUCATION



Education was controlled by the Church with doctors taught the ideas of Galen and Hippocrates. However, dissection was only allowed whilst reading the works of Galen! Overall, no freedom or research was afforded to doctors so they did not develop medicine further.

INDIVIDUALS



The ideas of Galen and Hippocrates dominated medicine in the period. Doctors used treatments like bleeding and purging which were based on the Humours and Opposites.

KING & GOVERNMENT



Governments, led by kings, took little interest in medicine as they instead focused on war and order! In rare instances, orders were enforced to clean the streets.