

### Summary

Very few scientific advances in this period. People believed disease was sent from God as a punishment for sin and it was not possible to question these teachings. The Church used ancient texts by Hippocrates and Galen to explain illness. These put forward the theory of the four humours. People also looked to astrology and urine charts to diagnose illness. Physicians would give patients a personalised diagnosis but treatment was often given by midwives and barber surgeons. People would also go to apothecaries for herbal remedies. The invention of the printing press was perhaps the most significant innovation of this period as it would encourage the spread of new ideas.

### Key Figures

Hippocrates	Ancient Greek physician, created the theory of the four humours.
Galen	Physician in ancient Rome who developed Hippocrates' theories further and wrote more than 350 books about medicine. His teachings were promoted by the Church because they fitted with Christian ideology.

### Other Resources

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgdfityc/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z7r7hyc/revision/1>

JG7TZ-RC98G—Schoolology Code



### The Four Humours

Created by the Greeks who believed the body was made of four 'humours' (or liquids). For good health these needed to be kept in balance. For example, someone with a cold was believed to have too much phlegm and someone with a fever had too much blood. Treatments to release humours included blood letting and purging.

### Challenge

Why was there little progress made in Medicine between 1250 and 1500?

What was the role of the Church in Medieval Medicine?

**460BC:** Hippocrates born

**130AD:** Galen born

**1066:** Battle of Hastings

**1167:** Oxford University open

**1249:** Spectacles invented

**1348:** The Black Death

**1287:** Hospital in York

**1489:** human dissection.

**TIMELINE**



SCAN ME

MEDIEVAL CAUSES, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF DISEASE	
<b>CAUSES</b>	A natural and logical theory was the <b>Four Humours</b> . The Greeks had developed this based on their observations of the body. The Church taught that <b>God</b> sent illness as a punishment or test. Astrologists believed that diseases were caused by the <b>alignment of the planets</b> and stars. It was also thought that <b>miasma</b> or foul air could cause disease.
<b>PREVENTION</b>	These were based around the Church. Praying to God, fasting, going on a pilgrimage or visiting a holy relic were thought to protect you from disease. Some people self-flagellated (whipped themselves) to show God they were sorry. During the Black Death people carried flowers to keep away the miasma or bad air.
<b>TREATMENT</b>	Bloodletting and purging were used. People were given an emetic to vomit or a laxative to clear the digestive system. Prayers were said for the sick, some paid for a special mass or went on pilgrimages. Astrology was used to dictate the timing of treatments. People were given herbal remedies e.g. aloe to improve digestion. Theriaca was a mixture of up to 70 herbs and spices. The rich were told to bathe to remove blockages.

The Black Death 1348-9	
What?	An outbreak of bubonic plague. The bacteria were carried in fleas who arrived on ships. The main symptoms were fever, vomiting, spasms and buboes (swellings)
Medieval beliefs about causes	See above. It was a punishment from God or bad air which had come from earthquakes. Astrologers saw an unusual alignment of the planets in 1345, they believed something terrible would happen
Treatment	Fires (smoke) or boiling vinegar to drive off the miasma. Bleeding and purging were used. Confess sins and ask for forgiveness from God.

Key Vocabulary	
<b>Apothecary</b>	People who mixed herbal remedies and had knowledge of the healing powers of plants
<b>Astrology</b>	The study of the alignment of the planets and stars used for diagnosing illness. Many people believed a bad alignment of the stars caused the Black Death.
<b>Barber Surgeon</b>	Barbers worked with sharp knives and cut hair as well as performing surgical procedures.
<b>The Black Death</b>	An outbreak of the Bubonic Plague spread by fleas on rats. Usually fatal within 3-5 days.
<b>Decaying matter</b>	Material such as vegetables or animals that is rotting.
<b>The Four Humours</b>	Theory that states illness is a result of an imbalance in the humours, these are blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile.
<b>Mass</b>	Roman Catholic Service where bread and wine is given.
<b>Miasma</b>	Smells from decaying matter that were believed to cause disease.
<b>Phlebotomy/blood letting</b>	A common treatment for the imbalance of the humours. This was done by cutting a vein, using leeches or cupping- piercing the skin with a knife.
<b>Physicians</b>	Medieval trained doctors. They would diagnose illness and recommend treatment but would not usually treat a patient themselves.
<b>Purging</b>	Making someone vomit or giving them a laxative to clear their digestive system.
<b>Quarantine</b>	Separating the sick from the healthy to stop the spread of disease. During the Black Death this was 40 days for people with symptoms.
<b>Regimen Sanitatis</b>	Instructions from physicians to wash, exercise and eat well to maintain good health.
<b>Remedies</b>	Herbal Infusions used to treat illness. A common cure called Theriaca contained 70 ingredients.
<b>Supernatural cures</b>	Religious cures such as healing prayers, paying for a mass, fasting and going on pilgrimages
<b>Urine Charts</b>	Physicians checked colour and thickness of urine to diagnose illness.