

This is only the first part of the Medicine and Surgery, I'll be writing up the rest of the notes tomorrow and on the weekend too most likely.

Comment if you think something is missing. I'll add it in later.

Medicine: c50 - 1350:

Hippocrates developed the Theory of the Four Humours as an explanation for illness. It essentially said that: "An excess in one of your four humours causes illness."

Physicians often attempted to cure illnesses by bleeding their patient, believing this would 'drain' out the excess humours and bring your mix of humours back into balance, curing you.

However, they did also use Galen's Theory of Opposites. This theory essentially said that "If you have too much of one humour, counter it with a food of the opposite humour." E.g eat hot peppers if you've got too much phlegm.

During the Roman times people were often treated at home.

Most of the population of the Roman Empire followed a natural approach, in that they used remedies passed down from father to son, these would be prepared by the father. (Natural Medicine. There is probably another better term for it but I can't remember it...)

Some people could afford to hire a trained doctor, they were too treated at home. (Using Hippocrates' and Galen's theories.)

Soldiers on the other hand were treated at hospitals that were often in forts. A few of these hospitals were open to the public, but this failed to make a large impact as it had very little effect on the lives of most people.

Many people visited the public baths if they were unwell, at that time it was believed that the water of the public baths had 'healing' properties.

Temples were also visited, in which the person either made an offering to the gods or consulted the priests, or maybe even both...

Romans did adopt the Asclepions when they took over the Greek Empire. They were healing temples, sacred to the god Asclepius. People often went here to be 'cured' of their illnesses. [Here's a link to some info.](#) It's wikipedia though, so take it with a grain of salt.

Roman ideas on the cause of diseases split into three categories:

- Supernatural. A god had sent down the disease or it was a curse.
- Bad air from swamps or places where there were bad smells.

- Imbalance in a person's humours.

Public baths in Roman Britain were very accessible, most towns had them and admission was cheap enough for most people to go everyday. These baths reduced the chance of catching a disease as it increased the hygiene of the general populace. The reason why the Romans had these baths wasn't because they were drag queens, it was because they recognised there was a link between dirt and disease, hence the urge to keep clean.

The baths also provided the facilities to keep fit. (Not sure how this links but seems relevant, edit something in here if you know. Isn't fitness separate from health...?)

The romans had complex sewer systems which took waste away from public baths etc and emptied the waste into a river away from the town.

There's a disadvantage. It's that the Romans had built open drains into most towns and cities, hence when the water level was low and there wasn't enough for the sewer to work properly it remained in the drains, which meant that waste built up and made disease more likely.

The reason why they had such good public health isn't probably relevant, ~~but I'm feeling paranoid~~. Nevermind, it wasn't in the textbook I'm ~~plagiarizing~~ making notes from. It just said what they made and who made it, ie. the Army made roads so that messages could be received faster. (By making travel faster.) If you actually think this is relevant comment on here, if I can be bothered enough tomorrow I'll add it in.

What went down when the Romans left:

- Loss of one centralised government, hence public health systems suffered and fell into disrepair, this means the drains, sewage system etc.
- People's possessions, crops and livelihoods were destroyed by the conflict. This meant that poverty increased. Nobody (a few probably could still hire a physician but eh...) could afford to hire a physician.
- It became dangerous to travel. Ideas became isolated and couldn't spread as easily to other places. Also, people couldn't go from town to town looking for medical knowledge, they couldn't learn from anyone else without risking their lives. Well, not until the 12th century...
- Many, many books were destroyed that contained medical knowledge, hence few people could read through Galen's and Hippocrates' work and become qualified to work as a physician. (Because that's all they needed.)

The importance of the Church increased during this. This is because:

- It was an international organisation across Europe, an important channel of communication.
 - Learning (Books, scrolls etc.) were preserved in the libraries of monasteries and convents. Hence, the church controlled Education.
 - People believed very strongly in religion and accepted the church's authority over their lives.
 - People believed that illness was a sign of sin, as your body was a reflection of your soul, hence if your soul became blackened or you sinned it would be reflected upon your body, hence the sin bit. Also, they believed that God might've sent it to test you.
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In the Middle Ages there was no change in treatment. This was due to the fact they continued to use Galen's and Hippocrates' theories without developing anything else. Nor the Romans nor the English had contributed anything. This was probably due to the Church limiting who could learn to become a physician and the fact that they supported Galen's teachings, as he believed that we had a soul, amongst other things.

Many people still believed that God had sent down the disease to punish them, despite Hippocrates specifically saying that he didn't think that illnesses were from God, that they were caused by other things. People still flocked to holy shrines in the hope that God would forgive them. They also still tried to do stuff like rubbing snail juice on their eyes to cure blindness.

There's more but I don't feel like it's relevant and I CBA.

Galen's influence upon medicine and treatment in the Middle Ages was quite large, almost all, if not all, treatments that occurred in that time were either based upon his or Hippocrates' work. (I'm not including herbal remedies into this statistic.) His biggest influence was probably his preference to bleed someone to attempt to treat them, it was his 'go to' method essentially.

Public Health:

There was a lack of it because:

- The water wasn't clean, most of the waste in latrines met the river where people drew their water from, this was due to the fact that they were built over the rivers.
- No way of removing sewage, it remained in open drains, cesspits or was flushed into river or streams.
- Remains of butchered animals often left on the streets, which attracted rats and mice.

For the rich on the other hand...

- Good standards of hygiene due to the fact they bathed and had a privy (a private latrine) so that waste would be kept away from living areas.
- They had stone sewers. That's important. Not the stone bit, but the sewers bit.
- Monks and Nuns had a high standard of hygiene due to the fact that latrines were usually build over running water, so waste would be carried away.
- Large baths known as stewes used by the rich to bathe together, it could be a social occasion, as they could share food and drink.

Medical Training (c50 - c1350)

- Most doctors trained by reading books such as the Hippocratic Collection. (The ideas of Hippocrates, recording and written down.) Alternatively, they could work with someone who was already a successful doctor.
- The reason why they could just read a couple of books and 'train' as a doctor was because there was no organization to check that doctors actually were knowledgeable or if they had the skills required. However, these works were usually 'preserved' by the church in the libraries of monasteries etc.
- By the 12th century Doctors could be trained at monasteries and convents, this separate course was called 'Ars Medicinae'. (This method of learning was controlled by the Church and hence was based to reinforce upon Galen's ideas and hence students weren't encouraged to study anatomy or look for mistakes in his teachings...) This course allowed towns to be able to verify if a doctor was qualified by the 13th century.

Hospitals:

- Hospitals, during the Middle Ages, took the approach of 'Care not cure' due to the fact that Christianity was still prominent at the time; therefore, illness was seen as punishment for your sins as your body was seen as a reflection of your soul, hence if you were ill, your soul would be 'ill' too so to speak. (ie. you did something wrong.) Also, illness was seen as something to overcome by yourself by praying to God, it was thought that if you'd redeemed yourself in God's eyes he would cure you, this was because illness was also seen as a punishment.
- Due to this approach few, if any, doctors were appointed at any hospitals, the majority of the staff who ran the hospitals would consist of mainly priests and nuns.

- All beds were placed in such a way that the sick person (can't call them a patient because they're not being treated....) could see the altar, religious statues and stained glass windows to help them focus on religion and be healed.
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Almshouses:

- They began to be setup in the 14th century to care for the 'deserving' poor and elderly. The people who resided in these almshouses were expected to abide by strict rules regarding behaviour and prayer. The almshouses, despite providing care for the sick, weren't intended to be hospital-eque establishments, providing medical treatment.
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