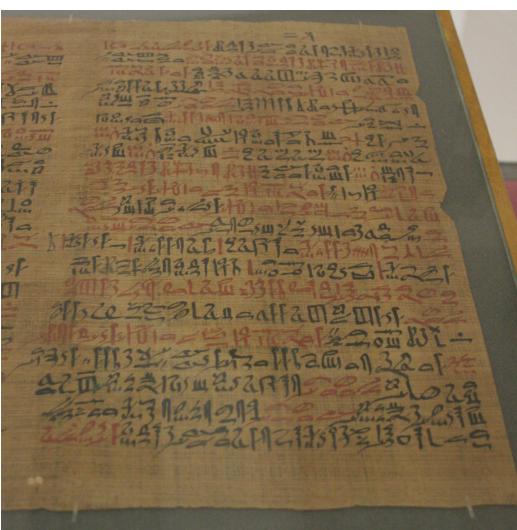


Natural Products in Antiquity

Natural products have been used in medicine for most of recorded history. Documents such as the Ebers Papyrus (2900 BC, Egypt), Shennong Herbal (神农本草经, 100 BC, China), and Sushruta Samhita (सुश्रूतसंहिता, 600 BC, India) are among the earliest known texts which collectively detail use of thousands of different natural products in medicine.

Trial and error was the dominant way in which effective medicines were found in antiquity - and arguably still is today.



Top: Depiction of Shennong with medicinal plants. Shennong is thought to have taught the ancient Chinese agriculture.

Middle: Section of the Sushruta Samhita. One of the foundations of Ayurvedic medicine.

Bottom: Section of the Ebers Papyrus. Thought to have been a compendium of older medical texts that have been lost to history.