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# The Black Death Of 1348 As The Greatest Biomedical Disaster In World History

The Black Death of 1348 was the greatest biomedical disaster in world history. In only three years the Bubonic plague killed a third of people in Europe (Cantor, pg. 6). Due to a lack of general medical knowledge the plague was easily able to spread across locations like Europe and Asia, resulting in awful warning signs of being infected. The Bubonic plague was a widespread pandemic with terrible symptoms that will forever be a part of history.

Basic hygiene was rare, and vaccinations were centuries away. So, what could be done? Lee states, "... Although there was not much distance between physicians' advice and old wife's tales." (pg181) Medieval physicians followed the theories of the second century Greek Dr. Galen, which accredited sickness to an imbalance in the bodily conditions. The primary manner of diagnosis was virtually taking an educated guess via the coloration and consistency of urine. The main medication for illnesses concerned renewal of a supposed bodily balance with the aid of enemas or bloodletting. Through cleansing the bowels there was an intended healing effect. Drawing blood from an ill patient was considered a reputable treatment until the nineteenth century. Nineteenth century medieval medication brought antiseptic surgical treatment and anesthesia and smallpox vaccination, however within the face of an endemic outbreak was not a great deal better off than the physicians of 14th century England. (Cantor) It's treatments had been a lot like as others had written: "room should be aired with charcoal fires in stone pots in the middle of chambers rather than in the city chimneys where that chance of smoking out the plague would be lost, up the chimney; in addition, 'put and your fire a little quantity of frankincense, Juniper, dried rosemary, or of bay leaves'. Rosemary wants to be soaked and boiled and strong vinegar in the fumes allowed to 'ascend into the middle of every roome'. Angelica route was to be chewed, and sorrel steeped in vinegar was to be eaten 'in the morning fasting, with a little bread and butter, sorrel sauce is also very wholesome against the same'. The advice...Was 'written by a learned physician for the health of his Countrey'" (Lee, pg182).

Internal the prevention of the unfold of the health problem in each and every house, all hygienic measures are essential, which consists of proper sewerage, purity of water supply, isolation of the unwell, disinfection of clothing and bedding and disinfection of the room, and all needless contact with the ill to be prevented. (Wyman) Kelly claims, "It cannot survive very long on surfaces like chairs, tables, and floors, and it operates optimally only within a narrow climatic range - air temperatures between 50 and 80°F and humidity above 60% and 80%" (pg36). The bubonic plague can now be averted these days by way of having clothing inspected or burned

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to remove all of the fleas. Humans who are infected with this disease must be quarantined for at least three days after being put on antibiotics. In the course of the plague epidemic many rodents die, inflicting hungry fleas to seek out a different source of blood. The bacteria spread with the aid of bites from contaminated fleas, bites or scratches from infected animals, or direct contact with contaminated animal carcasses. (Cantor, pg11).

The first historical record of bubonic plague is in Central Asia and 1338/39 (Stöppler, pg3). What's most perplexing about the black death within the 14th century was its very fast distribution, a quality more featured of a cattle disease than a rodent distributed one. Consuming tainted meat from sick herds of cattle is a direct transmission to human beings. If a human contracts bubonic plague without an antidote, which was not available until the Nineteen Forties, "there is a four out of five probability that he will die within two weeks" (Cantor, pg12). In addition, it can kill almost anything put in front of it, which include human beings, rats, gerbils, squirrels, prairie dogs, camels, chickens, pigs, or even lions. Like other fundamental pathogens, the plague pathogen is a successful killer as it found out a way to be an adaptable killer. It is able to be transmitted through 31 different species. (Kelly) The plague produced nearly as high of a degree of mortality within the winter months as in summer time. (Cantor)

There are 3 methods bacilli can input the body: through inoculation via an external wound or abrasion, by way of breathing, and by way of introduction into the stomach. Skin to skin contamination is not possible, except if the one to be infected has a wound, and the infectors skin has been soiled via feces, blood, or the contents of the buboes. The person might also contract the disease through breathing in the dust from the infected homes which contain the germ; moreover, by way of swallowing contaminated fluid or consuming infected food (Wyman). It's now known that the bacillus traveled from person to person through the air as well as through the bite of infected fleas and rats. The plague was carried by fleas that usually traveled on rats but jumped off to other mammals when the rats died. "...It was most likely carried by oriental rat fleas living on the black rats that were regular passengers on merchant ships, spreading throughout the Mediterranean and Europe" (Stöppler, pg2).

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