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Exam focus

- Question 1: Key features
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- Question 3: Similarity or difference
- Question 4: Causation
- Question 5 and 6: A judgement about change, continuity and significance

Part 1 Medicine in Britain, c.1250–present

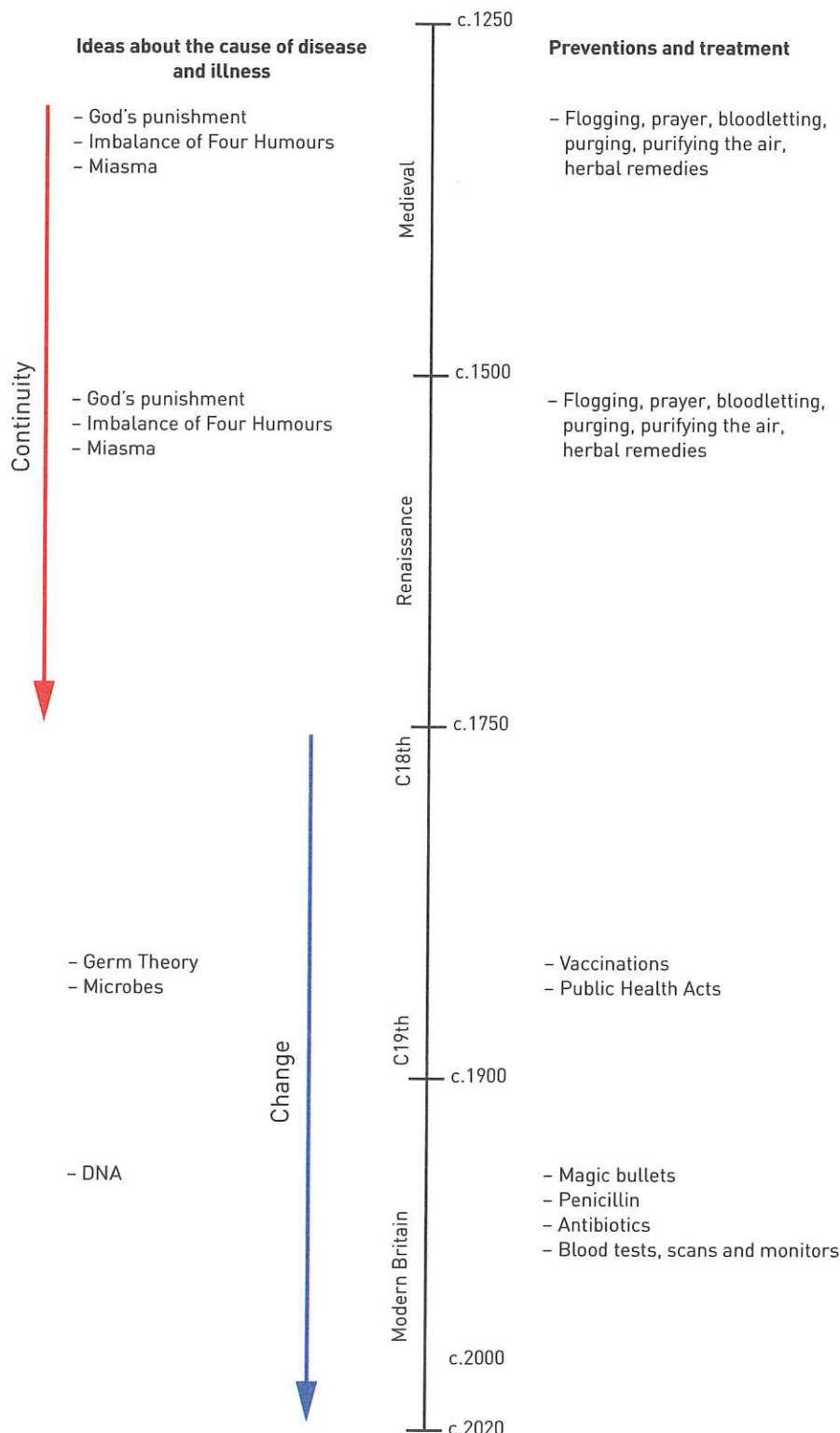
An overview of medicine from c.1250

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Medicine in Britain is a development study. It is important that you have a secure chronological understanding of the content – what happened, and when. You also need to be able to identify change and continuity in the understanding of the cause of disease and illness, and in the methods of prevention and treatment.

Revision task

Create your own medicine timeline by copying this timeline. Make it bigger. You could use a roll of lining paper. As you work through this book, add key events, individuals and discoveries.



Exam tip

You need to be aware of what changed and continued in medicine from c.1250 to the present day. Look for patterns, trends and turning points.

The role of factors

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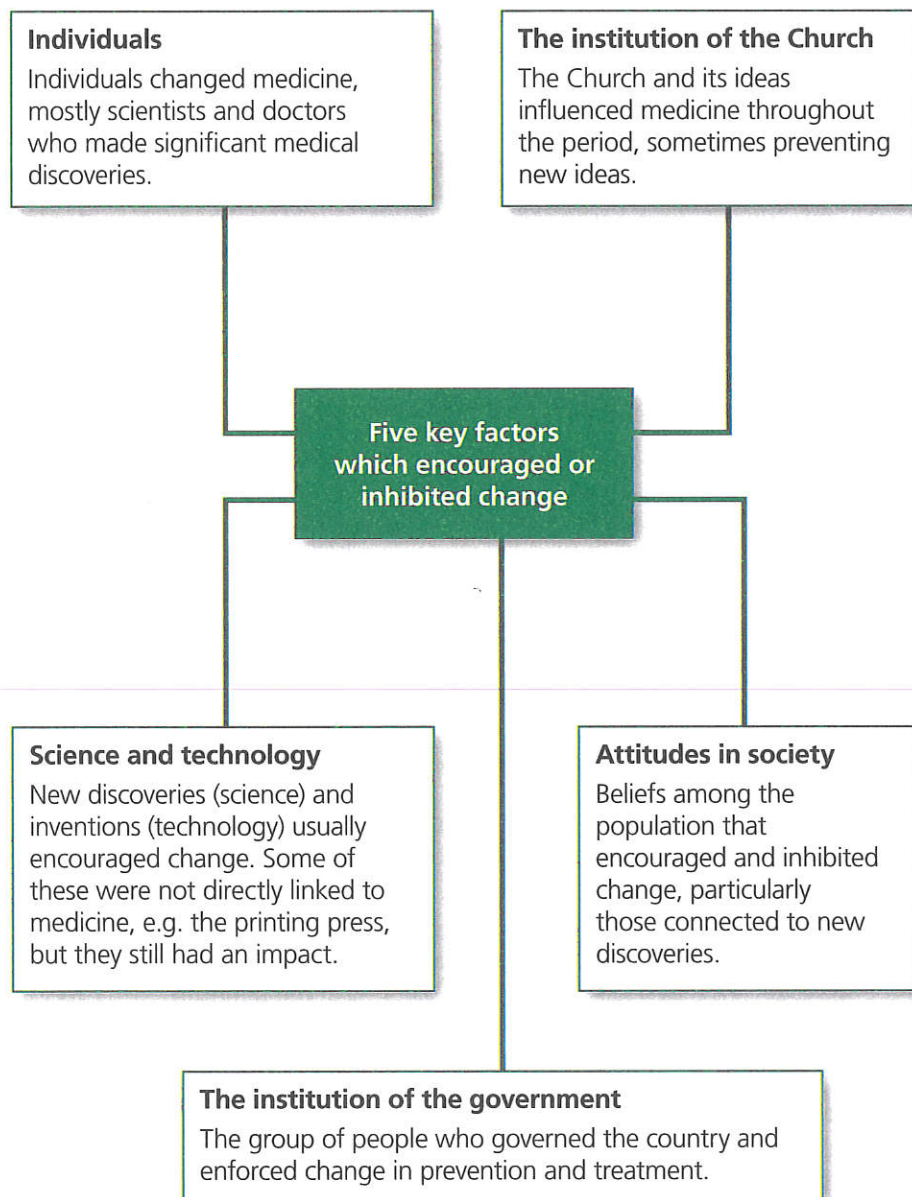
Factors are things that influenced medicine in the following ways:

- They helped to cause change: for example, the factor science and technology led to Pasteur discovering germs after experimenting with milk in 1860.
- They helped to prevent change: for example, the factor of the Church hindered any advance in medical knowledge during the medieval period because the Church protected the ideas of Galen and did not allow them to be challenged.

The main factors that you could be asked about in your exam are shown in the diagram below, with an explanation of what they mean.

Revision task

Create a table of the factors in each time period that led to a change in medical understanding of the cause of disease and illness and new preventions and treatment. Repeat this for the care provided within the community.



Exam tip

You need to be aware of what and how each factor contributed to medical developments during each time period. Look at what factors caused change and continuity. Look for patterns and trends.

c.1250–c.1500: Medicine in medieval England

The Church and religious beliefs had a great influence over medicine during this period, leading to a continuation of ideas about cause, preventions and treatments.

1 Ideas about the cause of disease and illness

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Medieval England was a religious society. The majority of people followed the teachings of the Catholic Church and attended services regularly. The cause of disease and illness was unknown due to the lack of scientific knowledge. The majority of people in medieval England could not read or write and would learn from what they heard in church about the causes of illness and disease. The Church controlled education and the universities, where **physicians** were trained.

1.1 Supernatural and religious explanations

Supernatural explanation	Religious explanations
Astrology, the alignment of the planets and stars, was used when diagnosing illness	The Church taught that people's sins were to blame for their illnesses and that illness and disease were sent as a punishment from God
Star charts (map of the night sky) would be consulted by looking at when a patient was born and when they fell ill to help provide a diagnosis of what was wrong with them	When people recovered, the Church declared that this was thanks to the patient's prayers
	The Church also taught that disease was sent by God to cleanse the soul of sin or to test your faith

1.2 Rational explanations

Theory of the Four Humours	Miasma Theory
The Theory of the Four Humours was developed in Ancient Greece by Hippocrates	A miasma was bad air that was believed to be harmful
It continued to influence medical ideas in medieval England	In medieval England it was believed that bad air and smells contained poisonous fumes that caused disease and illness
This theory suggested that the body was made up of four liquids (humours) – blood, phlegm, black and yellow bile – and an imbalance of these substances caused illness and disease	Medieval beliefs suggested that any rotting matter could transmit disease
It was believed that an equal balance of the humours led to good health	

The influence of Hippocrates and Galen

Galen, a physician in Ancient Rome, extended the Theory of the Four Humours by suggesting that the humours should be rebalanced by using the Theory of Opposites. He suggested that too much phlegm, for example, was caused by cold and the 'opposite' should be used, such as hot chillies and peppers to rebalance the humour. Galen also believed in the idea of the soul, which fitted with the teachings of the Church. This led to the Church promoting the ideas of Galen, and doctors widely using the Theory of the Four Humours, throughout the period c.1250–c.1500.

Key terms

Diagnosis Identifying the nature of an illness after considering the different symptoms

Miasma Smells from decomposing material were believed to cause disease

Physician A person qualified to practise medicine

Rational An idea based on logic

Supernatural Ideas unable to be explained by science or the laws of nature

Key individuals

Galen A doctor in Ancient Rome. Galen had his ideas recorded in more than 350 books

Hippocrates A leading physician from Ancient Greece. Hippocrates created the Theory of the Four Humours after carefully observing and recording the symptoms of his patients

Key factors

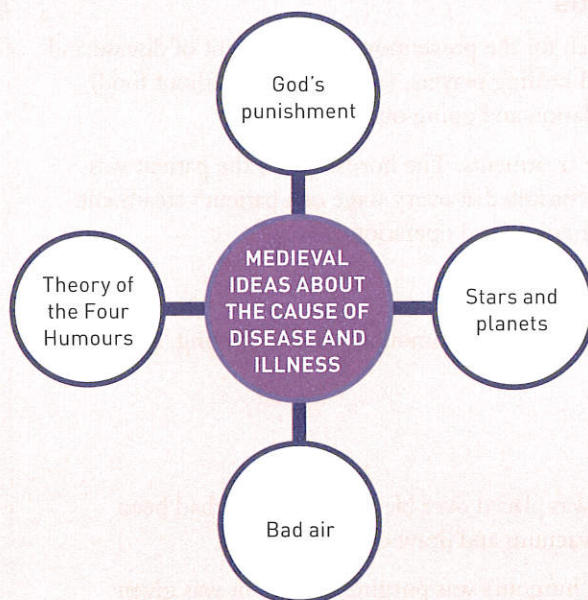
The Church It was very influential during the Middle Ages and religion was used to explain the causes of illness.

Attitudes in society Religious beliefs in the Middle Ages dominated medical thinking. Galen's ideas continued as the Church accepted them.



Memory map

Create a memory map to show the different ideas that people in medieval England had about the cause of disease. Add some key words from the information on page 6 and your own knowledge to the diagram below. Use two different colours to show whether they are religious and supernatural explanations or rational explanations. To help you remember the information, you could add small drawings.



Eliminate irrelevance

Here is an exam-style question:

Explain why there was continuity in ideas about the cause of disease during the period c.1250–c.1500. (12 marks)

You may use the following in your answer:

- The Church ■ Galen

You **must** also use information of your own.

Below is a paragraph which is part of an answer to the question above. Some parts of the answer are not relevant to the question. Identify these and draw a line through the information that is irrelevant, justifying your deletions in the margin.

In medieval England there were religious and supernatural explanations for the cause of illness. The Church was very powerful and controlled education throughout the period, which led to the continuity of ideas. The Church taught that God was responsible for illness and disease. The Church taught that God sent disease as a punishment for sin or to cleanse the soul. As a result of this, many people would also turn to the Church for treatments and preventions. Religious believers would attend church and pray, pay for a special mass to be said to remove their sin and also fast. Some believers would go on a pilgrimage and during the Black Death in 1348 flagellants across Europe would whip themselves to show God how sorry they were for their sins and to show that they did not need to be punished with the disease. These beliefs continued throughout the period c.1250–c.1500 because the Church remained in control of education and continued to teach these ideas. Due to the power that the Church held in society, there was no challenge of the religious explanations, treatments and preventions for disease and illness.

2 Approaches to prevention and treatment

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2.1 Approaches to prevention and treatment and their connection with ideas about disease and illness

Supernatural and religious

Many people turned to the Church for the prevention and treatment of disease and illness. Religious actions included healing prayers, fasting (going without food), lighting candles in church, flagellation and going on **pilgrimages**.

Star charts were used to prescribe treatments. The horoscope of the patient was also considered. Star charts were consulted at every stage of a patient's treatment: herb gathering, **bloodletting**, **purgings** and operations.

Rational

The most common treatment to balance the humours was bloodletting. A patient's blood was drained by:

- cutting the vein
- placing leeches on the skin
- cupping, where a heated cup was placed over bleeding skin that had been pierced by a knife to create a vacuum and draw out more blood.

Another treatment to balance the humours was purging. A patient was given something to make them vomit (an emetic) or a laxative to clear out the body. Emetics usually consisted of strong herbs, for example aniseed or parsley. Linseeds were used as a laxative, and this is still used today.

Herbal remedies were also used to treat the sick. Aloe vera, mint and camomile were common.

To prevent illness, medieval people were encouraged to take care of their bodies by exercising, sleeping, keeping clean, breathing clean air and avoiding stress. Guidance was given in the **regimen sanitatis**.

Medieval people also **purified the air** by spreading sweet herbs and carrying flowers (a posy).

Key terms

Bloodletting

The treatment of opening a vein to draw blood from the patient

Herbal remedy

A medicine made from a mixture of plants

Pilgrimage A journey made to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion

Purgings Physically removing the humours from the body

Purifying the air

Removing the bad air/smells thought to cause illness

Regimen sanitatis A set of instructions provided by physicians to help a patient look after their health and avoid illness. It first appeared in the work of Hippocrates and was later picked up by Galen

Revision task

Summarise the care given by the physician, apothecary, barber surgeon, hospital and the home.

Exam tip

You need to be able to connect the treatments and preventions used in medieval England to the ideas about the cause of illness and disease.

Key factors

The Church The Church played a large role in the care of the sick and training of physicians during the Middle Ages.

Attitudes in society

Religious beliefs during the Middle Ages dominated medical thinking, which led to many religious ideas about prevention and treatment.

2.2 New and traditional approaches to hospital care in the thirteenth century

Physician	<p>Attended a university for at least seven years to gain a medical degree</p> <p>Diagnosed illness and suggested a treatment</p> <p>Studied a patient's blood and urine and consulted star charts to diagnose illness</p> <p>Rarely treated patients</p>
Apothecary	<p>Mixed herbal remedies</p> <p>Gained their knowledge from experience; either their own or passed down from family members</p> <p>Less expensive than a doctor</p> <p>Some used supernatural treatments by providing charms for patients</p>
Barber surgeon	<p>Least qualified medical professional in medieval England</p> <p>Performed simple surgery using a sharp knife, such as bloodletting and pulling teeth</p>
Hospitals	<p>Number increased throughout the Middle Ages</p> <p>Owned by the Church and care was given by monks and nuns</p> <p>Some hospitals set up specially to look after lepers</p> <p>Infectious, insane and pregnant patients were rejected</p> <p>Provided rest and prayer rather than treatment</p>
Home	<p>Majority of sick people were cared for at home</p> <p>Women would care for their relatives</p> <p>Sometimes the local wise woman or lady of the manor was asked to use her knowledge</p> <p>Treatments included rest, herbal remedies, and keeping the patient clean, warm and well fed</p> <p>Women also acted as midwives</p> <p>Women were not allowed to become physicians</p>



Identify the view

Read the exam-style question below and identify the view that is offered about medieval prevention and treatment of disease and illness.

'Prevention and treatments for disease and illness in medieval England were based on religious ideas.' How far do you agree? Explain your answer. (16 marks, with a further 4 marks available for spelling, punctuation and grammar.)

- 1 What view is offered by the statement about medicine in medieval England?

- 2 How far do you agree? Use your knowledge to agree and disagree with the statement given in the question. To plan an answer to this question, complete the following table.

Knowledge which agrees with the statement	
Knowledge which disagrees with the statement	

- 3 Now write paragraphs that agree and disagree with the statement.

The statement is partially correct ...

The statement is partially incorrect ...

3 Case study: Dealing with the Black Death, 1348–49

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The Black Death was an outbreak of the **bubonic plague** that first broke out in China and reached England in 1348. It is believed to have killed 40 per cent of the population of England. It was unlikely a victim would survive the disease once they caught it; they would die within three to five days. We know little about the treatments because its victims died so quickly.

Beliefs about the causes

Beliefs about the causes related to medieval views about the world, including:

- God had sent the disease as a punishment for sins.
- An unusual alignment of the planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn in 1345.
- An imbalance of the four humours (see page 6) or the existence of evil humours within the body.
- Bad air (miasma) which had corrupted the body's humours. This poisonous air was believed to have been released from a volcano or an earthquake.

Approaches to treatment

Treatments for the Black Death related to the ideas about its causes:

- People prayed, confessed sins, donated and asked God for forgiveness.
- Holy charms were worn to show one's religious beliefs.
- Bleeding, purging and treatments based on Galen's Theory of Opposites (see page 6) were used to rebalance the four humours.
- A victim would sniff strong herbs, such as myrrh, in order to replace the bad air in their body.
- Many victims would light fires to remove the bad air and replace it with the smoke and fumes from the fire.
- Because some victims survived once the pus was released, victims would lance the buboes in the hope that this would cure them of the disease.

Attempts to prevent its spread

Ways to prevent the Black Death from spreading centred around religion, keeping the streets clean to prevent bad air and isolating its victims.

- Many would pray to God in the hope of avoiding punishment.
- The king and bishops ordered processions in every church at least once a day.
- People went on pilgrimages and made sacrifices to God, such as fasting.
- **Flagellants** whipped themselves to ask for God's forgiveness.
- People carried posies of sweet-smelling herbs and flowers.
- Rakers cleared animal dung from the streets to stop creating bad air.
- Fines for throwing litter were increased to keep the streets cleaner.
- To reduce the waste on the streets, butchers had to use segregated areas to butcher animals or face punishment.
- Ringing bells and birds were used to keep the air moving.
- New quarantine laws were issued to prevent the movement of people. Those new to an area had to remain isolated for 40 days, to ensure they were not infected.
- The authorities **quarantined** houses of victims.

Key terms

Bubonic plague

A contagious and fatal epidemic disease caused by bacteria and characterised by chills, fever, vomiting and buboes

Flagellants Religious believers who whipped themselves to show God that they repented their sins and to ask for his forgiveness to avoid the plague

Quarantine Separating the sick to stop the spread of disease. Those with the disease were isolated in the quarantined area

Exam tip

You need to be able to explain the link between what people did to treat and prevent the Black Death and the medieval beliefs that existed about the cause of disease.



Organising knowledge

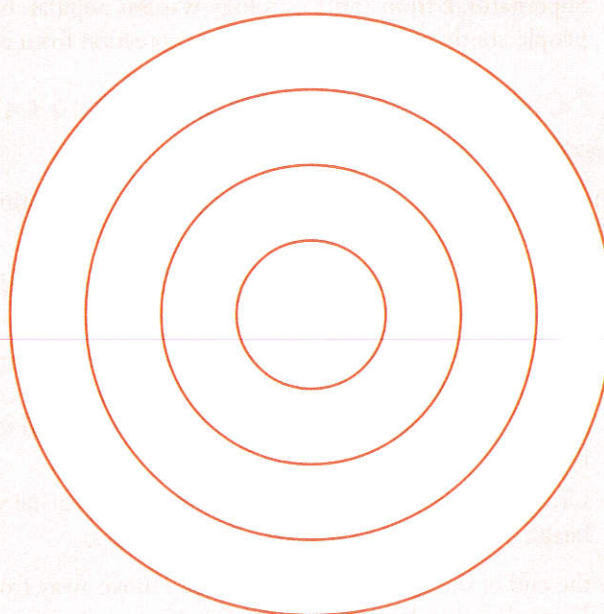
Use the information on page 10 to complete the table below to show the links between cause, treatment and prevention of the Black Death.

Black Death	Religion	Rational	Supernatural
Beliefs about cause			
Treatment			
Prevention			



Analysing factors

You need to understand the role that factors had on the medieval ideas about the cause of disease and the treatments and preventions that they used. Make a copy of the concentric circles. Rank order the factors in the box that explain the ideas that existed about cause, treatment and prevention, beginning with the most important in the middle to the least important on the outside. Explain your decisions by annotating the diagram.



For example, if you believe that the religious ideas about cause, treatment and prevention were the most influential, write 'The Church' in the centre circle. You can then annotate this with details of the religious ideas, such as it was believed that God sent the Black Death as a punishment for sins.

FACTORS

- government
- individuals
- attitudes in society
- the Church
- science and technology.

For a reminder about each factor see page 5.

c.1500–c.1700: The Medical Renaissance in England

Ideas about the causes of disease and illness were starting to change during the **Renaissance**. However, this led to very little change in methods of prevention and treatment. The Renaissance did see the introduction of science and technology improving medicine.

1 Ideas about the cause of disease and illness

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During the Medical Renaissance new ideas began to influence medicine and slowly replace old beliefs. As **Protestantism** spread across Europe, the Catholic Church was less able to promote its beliefs and control medicine. As a more **secular** society developed, scientific ideas were discovered both in medicine, and beyond.

1.1 Continuity in explanations of the cause of disease and illness

- Miasma Theory (see page 6): this idea continued and became more widespread during **epidemics**.
- The influence of the Church: during epidemics, such as the Great Plague, religious causes were still influential.
- Supernatural: from 1500, astrology was less popular, but during epidemics people continued to wear charms as protection from evil spirits.

1.2 Changes in explanations of the cause of disease and illness

The practice of medicine did not change much during this time, but the ideas about cause were starting to change:

- The decline in influence of the Church: most now believed that God did not send disease.
- The Theory of the Four Humours: this had been discredited and was not believed by physicians by the end of the seventeenth century. However, because patients understood it, the theory continued to be used to diagnose illness until this time.
- Urine analysis: physicians now understood that urine was not linked to ill health and no longer used it to diagnose illness.

By the end of the Renaissance, there was a move away from old ideas about medicine, but they had not been replaced.

Animalcules

A new idea that little animals were the cause of illness developed after they could be seen by newly invented, more powerful microscopes. These images were not very clear.

The work of Thomas Sydenham

Thomas Sydenham was important in moving medicine away from the ideas of Hippocrates and Galen. Sydenham believed in closely observing the symptoms of a patient, noting these down in detailed descriptions and then looking for remedies to treat the disease, rather than relying on medical books.

Key terms

Epidemic A widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time

Printing press A machine for reproducing text and pictures

Protestantism
The practice of the Protestant Church

Renaissance A revival of ideas from 1500 to 1700

Secular Not connected with religious or spiritual matters

Key individual

Thomas Sydenham

A well-respected doctor in London during the 1660s and 1670s. He was given the nickname of the 'English Hippocrates' because, like the Greek doctor, he placed great importance on observing a patient. His book *Observationes Medicae* was used for two centuries