

Tudors Health

What if you were ill?

In Tudor times you had to pay to see a Doctor, so only the rich could afford this. Tudor Doctors knew a lot about astronomy but very little about how the human body worked. They used unusual treatments such as; using leeches to suck blood, giving out special coins or jewels, or tasting the patient's urine to decide on their treatment.

The Plague Doctor Fun Facts

- Holding an onion to your ear cured earache
- The body held 4 liquids; blood, water, green and black bile!

What happened if you caught the Plague?

The average life expectancy of a Tudor was 35, because there were so many horrible illnesses and diseases. The Plague was one of the worst and if you caught it you would have a very high temperature, a terrible thirst and huge lumps under your armpits filled with puss. The Plague Doctor would visit wearing his leather mask filled with sweet smelling herbs, but he probably couldn't help.



Who else could help?



There were no dentists, but a Barber Surgeon could pull out a bad tooth – without anaesthetic!



You could buy a potion from the Apothecary.



Or get herbs from a 'Wise Woman!'

What if you were poor?

Tudors paid an 'Angel' to visit the Doctor – this was a coin which was worth 3 month's wages. So most poor people visited the Wise Woman or Cunning Woman who would give them herbs to heal them, called 'simples.' She could also give love potions or short poems to recite.

Sometimes Wise Women were accused of being witches!



Tudor Challenge:

- What herbs did the Wise Woman use? And what did they cure?
- Are leeches used in medicine today?
- What is a modern Apothecary called?
- How did they decide whether a woman was a witch or not?