



Click on the link to take you to an operation by a Roman doctor.

Here is the address too - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lXgG88Xx8Q>

Tell me why you would not want to be treated by a Roman doctor.

Roman Medicine

After a hard day marching on the roads, Roman soldiers needed to be fit and healthy.

- 1. Use the text to tell me how the Roman Empire looked after its soldiers.*

- 2. Explain how illness was treated. How do we know this was used for years?*

3. *How did Roman doctors treat illness?*

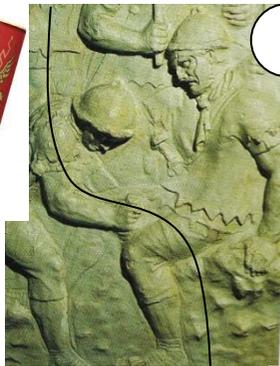
4. *Why would you be nervous if you needed surgery?*

5. *What is the evidence that suggest the Romans were firm believers in their gods?*

1

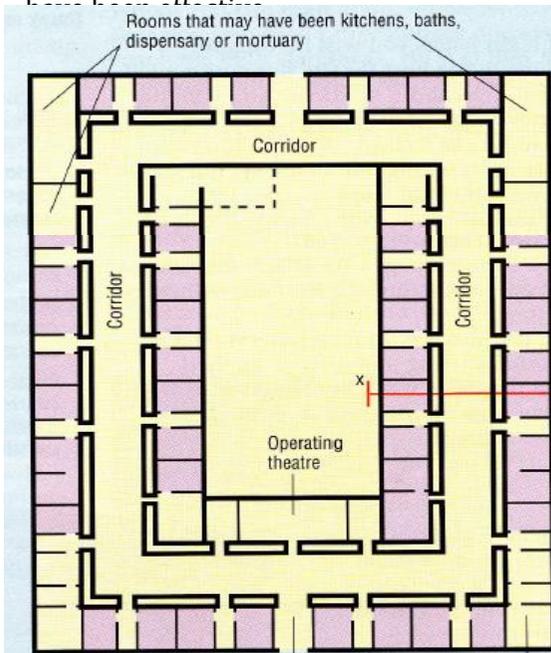
THE ARMY

Because it was an enormous empire vulnerable to attack from all sides, Ancient Rome needed a large professional army. The government did its best to ensure that each soldier stayed healthy. Each fort had its own hospital with wards, baths, and an operating theatre for surgery.



This Roman stone carving shows a doctor treating a soldier's injured leg.

Army doctors gained a huge amount of knowledge from treating soldiers. One army doctor, Dioscorides, wrote a huge book in 64AD which consisted of 600 herbal medicines! Modern doctors estimate that roughly 20% of these treatments would have been effective.

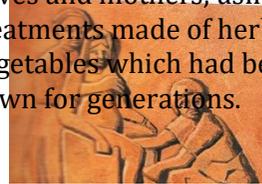


History

2

WOMEN & THE FAMILY

As in Ancient Greece, illness was normally treated in the family by wives and mothers, using treatments made of herbs and vegetables which had been passed down for generations.



This Roman carving shows a midwife delivering a baby.

3

DOCTORS



Like Greek doctors, Roman doctors often advised exercise and changes in diet, and frequently prescribed herbal medicine.



A Roman gymnasium in Turkey.

5

GODS & RELIGION

Many Romans appealed to their gods to help them when they were ill, such as Salus, the Roman goddess of health.

Gods were part of Romans' everyday life, and they were expected to be powerful.

In 295BC, when faced with a plague in Rome, they even turned to an outsider. They built a temple dedicated to the Greek god Asclepius!



Salus, Roman goddess of health.

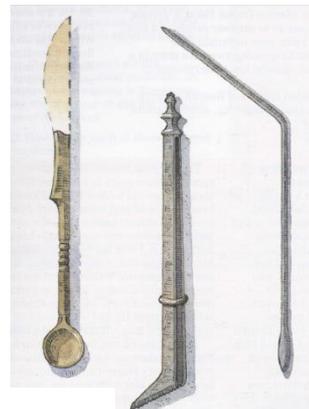
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SURGERY

Roman surgical instruments were very similar to those used by the Greeks. Internal operations were still rare because they were so risky.

Amputations (chopping off limbs) were done in order to stop conditions like gangrene spreading.

The most common surgical treatment, as in Greece, was bleeding. In the theory of the four humours, bleeding could help correct the balance of humours.



A Roman doctor's surgical tools found in the UK.