

Ancient medicine Sample questions and answers.

Comparisons over time.

Look back over your notes then answer as fully as you can the following questions.

1. Why is easier to find out about the Greeks rather than Prehistoric man ?
2. How similar is prehistoric medicine to Greek medicine ?
3. How did religion help the development of medicine in Egypt ?
4. Is the theory of the 4 humours a purely scientific theory ?
5. How similar was public health in prehistoric, Greek and Egyptian times ?
6. Is Greek medicine more scientific than Egyptian medicine ?

COMPARISONS OVER TIME

Sample answers

Question 1

As Greek Medicine is more recent than pre historic, there is obviously more existing evidence. Greece was also a settled, civilised society, where written records were kept. People were encouraged to think in Greek times, and write their ideas down. The evidence in pre historic times is less certain, and we are much more reliant on assumption and educated guesses.

Question 2

Although there are areas where they have little in common, there are clear links between pre historic and Greek medicine. They both used natural and herbal remedies, and religion and the spirit world played their part in both societies, with the medicine man and the Temple of Asclepius. Both eras recognised the importance of a healthy body.

Question 3

Egyptian religion helped the understanding of the human body. The process of embalming allowed the priest to see the major organs, however the ban on dissection meant this knowledge was limited. The healthy lifestyle led by the priests was seen as an example for others to follow.

Question 4

The four humours was a scientific explanation of disease, although links with the four elements showed the existence of a non scientific aspect of the theory.

Question 5

There are several similarities between the three periods in history and their approach to hygiene. All three groups understood the importance of cleanliness, although their approaches may have been slightly different. Both the Greeks and the Egyptians linked cleanliness and the service of the Gods. All three groups knew of the importance of disposing of their waste products, and of the benefits of exercise, although again, their approaches to exercise were slightly different. As a hunter/gatherer, pre historic man had to exercise. The Greeks and the Egyptians exercised for the benefit of it and for strength. As a hunter / gatherer, pre historic man had to exercise, whereas the Greeks and the Egyptians exercised for the benefit of it and for strength.

Question 6

Although both societies retained a spiritual aspect to their approach to medicine, both were also becoming more scientific. The Greeks had much less reliance on the influence of spirits and gods, and their medicine was removed from the priesthood. Doctors were a separate profession. The Greeks also developed the process of clinical observation and wrote down these observations. There was also an acceptance that nature was unrelated to the spirits and gods.