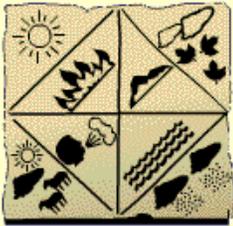


The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer

Chaucerian = earthy zest for life. Characters are bawdy, crude and revolting. They are portrayed realistically in their own voices. His tone is ironic, satirical and humorous, treating serious topics with wit and humor. Chaucer never directly preaches against or attacks his characters. He doesn't criticize their love of life and shows that they have a good deal of fun on the pilgrimage. The narrator joins in the fun wholeheartedly.

Medieval ideas about disease: Very different kinds of beliefs about health and medicine existed. Some were superstitious and had no scientific value. Others had some truth in them, or at least encouraged a more scientific approach.

Superstition (no scientific value)	Natural or Rational ideas (a scientific approach)
Charms and spells could cure illness	The balance of the four humours of black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm were thought to indicate what sort of person you were e.g. choleric or sanguine.
Doctors believed that the position of the planets affected people's lives and health. Some people would consult zodiac charts to choose the best treatments or the best time for an operation.	Herbs and plants could be used medicinally
Going on a pilgrimage would cure an illness	Urine analysis was a useful indication of the way the body was working. This is still used today to check for many conditions e.g. diabetes.
Being touched by a king or queen could cure scrofula (form of TB)	There were some hospitals, but they offered food, a bed and prayers rather than a cure



To the ancient Greeks, the ways in which a person behaved were an integral part of their general health. They believed that the body contained four fundamental liquids (called humours) based on the four elements of fire, air, water and earth. When one of these humours became dominant over the others, it was thought to affect the person's mood. The four humours, blood, yellow bile, phlegm and black bile, were each believed to be responsible for a different type of behavior. An excess of blood over the other fluids produced a ruddy complexion and a courageous, hopeful, amorous disposition. Too much phlegm resulted in calmness, then sluggishness and apathy. Yellow bile or cholera caused anger. Black bile, or melancholy, produced introspection, sadness, and depression. In Medieval times those who suffered from diseases were treated by bookish physicians who never touched their patients, but left this work to a medical assistant; or they were treated by apothecaries whose endless variety of herbs had little relation to the disease itself. In towns where there were no doctors or surgeons, the person to see for surgery was the local barber. The four main instruments of surgery were a hand operated drill, a multi-purpose extractor for removing teeth, a surgical saw, and forceps (for everything else).

Divisions of the Holy Roman (Catholic) Church

Regular: monastic, following rules, cloisters

Secular: Not bound by monastic restrictions, especially not belonging to a religious order

Ecclesiastical court: a court having jurisdiction in ecclesiastical affairs : a tribunal in an ecclesiastical body; pardoner, summoner. There was a movement of religious reform concerned with Papal abuses and abuses of ecclesiastical court