

# How doctors can help?

Ideally, we will help you to balance specific fluids known as 'black bile', 'yellow bile', blood and phlegm (the fluids made by your ear, nose and throat). As you know, to be in a bad or good humour is evidence of how healthy you are. Watch out for those in a bad mood- they may have the black death.

Doctors can help by releasing evil spirits by drilling a hole in your head to release them.

We may also use a techniques called Blood-letting – deliberately bleeding a vein –to reduce 'hot' blood.

You should blow your nose or clear your throat to get rid of too much 'cold' phlegm.



Some other cures to try-

- Rub onions, herbs or a chopped up snake on the boils or cut up a pigeon and rub it over an infected body.
- Drink vinegar, eat crushed minerals, arsenic, mercury or ten-year-old treacle.
- Sit close to a fire or in a sewer to drive out the fever, or fumigate the house with herbs to purify the air.
- If you believe you have sinned against God the priests recommend that you whip yourself as punishment
  - Mustard, mint sauce, apple sauce and horseradish will help balance wet, dry, hot and cold in your diet

Doctors might help a patient recover by bursting the buboes or taste tested urine for colour and health.

# The black death

## Public health leaflet



## What are the causes of the black death?



We are not certain what is causing the black death, but we believe it could be the result of-

- the movements of the planets
- a punishment from God
- bad smells and corrupt air
- enemies who had poisoned the wells
- staring at a victim
- wearing pointed shoes
- strangers to villages too were blamed

## When did it spread through England?

Today (Summer 1349) the Black death has spread to every town in England

It only began in June 1348, starting south west England, probably brought in by French soldiers.

It has spread rapidly, reaching Bristol in August and London by Autumn.



## Key Symptoms

**Bubonic plague** - victims of bubonic plague itself have a 50% chance of death.

The bubonic plague is a painful disease, with black buboes or swellings, in the groin and armpits, which can last up to a week. If the buboes burst you might recover.

**Pneumonic plague** - this attacks your the lungs. Victims die quickly, in one or two days. The mortality rate in this case is 90%.

**Septicaemic plague** - this infected the blood. Victims die quickly – there is no known cure for this.

