ANCIENT GREECE – DEVELOPMENTS IN KNOWLEDGE & ANATOMY

Developments in Medical Knowledge

- The Theory of the Four Humours meant the Greeks did everything in moderation, not eating too much made them more healthy.

- Greeks looked naturally for the causes of disease and treatments based upon these causes, they didn’t just blame the Gods.

- Hippocrates told his students that all diseases could be treated naturally without using any magic and superstition.

- Greek doctors very rarely dissected dead bodies.

- They were unaware of how much they could have learned through dissection, and thought dissecting the dead was wrong.

- Because dissection was not carried out in Ancient Greece, Greek doctors missed out on anatomical knowledge that could be gained.

- One of the first Greek doctors to dissect was Herophilus, he discovered that the brain controls the body. He also showed the difference between arteries and nerves and identified parts of the stomach.

Alexandria - the centre of all medical knowledge

- The Greeks built a university and library at Alexandria.

- The library of Alexandria attempted to collect all the knowledge of the world and was the centre of new medical ideas.

- Unlike in the rest of Greece, human dissection was permitted.

- Alexandria became famous for training medics and surgeons. Accurate observation was the key to much of the advancement made there.

- Doctors from Alexandria went to practise all over the world.

Developments in Surgery

- Surgery advanced slightly in Ancient Greece, although it was still risky.

- The use of iron and steel gave doctors stronger and sharper surgical instruments to operate with.

- The Ancient Greeks used surgery as a last resort - most treatments were carried out outside the body, apart from the draining of the lungs if a patient had pneumonias.

- Surgeons developed good techniques for setting broken bones and in extreme cases would amputate limbs.
Do you know your stuff?

1. Suggest how the Theory of the Four Humours benefitted the Greeks
   - Natural treatments
   - Everything in moderation

2. Why did the Ancient Greeks miss out on knowledge of physiology?
   - Dissection was banned in Greek of Greece.
   - "The centre of all medical knowledge"

3. Alexandria became famously known as the...

4. Surgery was used as a last resort, and most treatments were carried out outside of the body, expect from drawing the lungs.

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