

History of Egyptian Medicine

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Abstract

The origin of medicine in ancient Egypt dates back to 3500 B.C., as time progressed the Egyptians mastered the art of medicine and practiced it as highly skilled professionals. They had gained advanced knowledge of surgery, dentistry, gynecology, gastrointestinal, and urinary disorders. They used therapeutics extending from plants, herbs, animal products as well as minerals. Egyptian physicians were co-equal of priests, trained in schools within the temples. Egyptian medicine reached its peak in the days of Imhotep (2800 B.C.) who was famous not only as one of the most renowned physicians of his era he was also an architect who built the step pyramid at Saqqarah. Specializations prevailed in ancient Egypt as there were ophthalmologists, neurologists, and dentists. Edwin Smith Papyrus (3000-2500 B.C.), and the Ebers Papyrus (1150 B.C.) are two of the best medical text. The Edwin Smith Papyrus is considered one of the oldest medical manuscripts on surgery which accurately mentions partial paralysis due to cerebral lesions in skull fractures. The Ebers Papyrus medical text contains 700 magical prescriptions and folk remedies to cure ailments including dog and crocodile bite, toenail pain and injuries and to get rid of pests such as flies and rats. They were familiar with plants and herbs-based drugs which they generally employed to cure the illnesses and injuries. They used cumin, Aloe Vera, safflower, castor oil, linseed oil, mustard oil, opium, drugs made of minerals such as copper salts, plain salts etc. They also used animals or animal-based products for drug preparation such as milk, eggs, honey, liver, meat, fat, horns etc. The ancient Egyptians had some basic knowledge of inoculation which they used against smallpox. They knew that plague spreads from rodents. For over 2500 years, Egyptian medicine dominated the ancient world. This article is an attempt to understand some information about the history of Egyptian medicine. We will discuss some basic sources of information of Egyptian medicine in addition to common treated diseases and therapeutics in ancient Egypt.

The origin of medicine in ancient Egypt dates back to 3500 B.C. and the world's first medical school was opened at the Temple of Neith as Sais in 3000 B.C., which was run by a female physician. There were two branches of medicine in ancient Egypt, the empirical one and the magical or religious one. Ancient Egyptians were highly religious and it played important role in their daily lives. Over time,

their religious life and views not only helped them to understand the functioning of human body but it also helped them to understand the cures to heal the body ailments. The magical medicine included incantations, wearing of amulets to cure diseases and ward of wild animals, and imagery related to various deities who they worshiped and at times invoked to cure the diseases and injuries.

Health and disease were viewed by the ancient Egyptians as manifestations of an individual's relationship with the world, which included other people, animals, spirits, and gods. They had good knowledge of mortals and divine powers, and believed that they interacted with each other. Maat (ancient Egyptian concepts of truth, justice, harmony, morality) was an essential part of their lives which governed their actions and methods to healing diseases and injuries. A healthy person had balanced maat, however diseases and injuries indicated maat was not balanced. They were of the opinion that health was dependent on the balance, as Egypt was dependent on Nile River. The ancient Egyptians emphasized more on purity, they thought pure body could easily connect with the divinity. The ancient Egyptians considered illnesses and injuries as the divine messages with the access to *heka* (magical power). *Heka* was used to cure the patients along with incantations and other rituals.

The modern knowledge of ancient Egyptian medicine has been gained through archeological sources, human remains (mummies), tombs, ruins of temples, hieroglyphs written on stones and walls, and through other written texts. Egyptian medicine reached its peak in the days of Imhotep (2800 B.C.) who was famous not only as one of the most renowned physicians of his era he was also an architect who built the step pyramid at Saqqarah. Specializations prevailed in ancient Egypt as there were ophthalmologists, neurologists, and dentists. Edwin Smith Papyrus (3000-2500 B.C.), and the Ebers Papyrus (1150 B.C.) are two of the best medical text. The Edwin Smith Papyrus is considered one of the oldest medical manuscripts on surgery which accurately mentions partial paralysis due to cerebral lesions in skull fractures. The Ebers Papyrus medical text contains 700 magical prescriptions and folk remedies to cure ailments including dog and crocodile bite, toenail pain and injuries and to get rid of pests such as flies and rats.

The Medicine of Prehistoric Time (The Earliest Medicine)

Medical activities are as old as the first human on earth; and has been one of the most ancient professions of humankind. It has developed parallel to the mental development of humankind. Medicine is a highly intricate system of theoretical knowledge and practical activity, intended to preserve and strengthen the human health, prevent diseases, and treat the ill population.

According to modern data the history of medicine begins from the stone age with a struggle for survival by the first human inhabitants, contrary to widespread religious beliefs. For centuries, humanity practiced primitive preventive medicine by using herbals or in other cases appeasing the gods through different rituals and sacrifices. Modern theorist, consider this age as the Golden Age of early medicine, as people remained happy and healthy unaware of deadly diseases and other sufferings. Gradually, people acquired knowledge, based on chance observation and trial and error.

Ancient people were hunters, fishermen, and gatherers who lived as nomadic small familial groups. They were unaware of diseases such as smallpox, measles, and malaria; mostly because these pathogens are contagious for areas having high population densities. Palaeopathologists and other researchers have never found any archeological evidence which establishes the prehistoric people faced any epidemic, it might be accounted for their nomadic behaviour. They were always in search of food and never settled at a particular place for a longer period, subsequently there was no water logging or pollution and filth accumulation which could become otherwise the breeding ground for many pathogens.

Archeological evidences prove that prehistoric people might have encountered few diseases. Pathogens like helminths, fleas, ticks, bacteria, and viruses cause severe illness in the host but they produced immunity against reinfection in survivors, as a token of compensation. Evidences show that soil-borne anaerobic bacteria caused gangrene, botulism,

and tetanus whenever they penetrated through the damaged skins in prehistoric people. Rabies was common, occurred due to animal bites like dogs, foxes, and wolves. Evidences show that many used to die due to Brucellosis caused when people eat raw meat of sick animals.

As the population started increasing, it caused food scarcity. Gradually, as the time passed, hunters and gatherers evolved into shepherds and farmers. They started growing wild kind of plants and took wild animals under their control to exploit them for their usage. As prehistoric people started adopting new occupation, it produced new type of diseases and illnesses. The diseases which were contagious to animal, started spreading to humans as well. Most of the diseases caused by dogs and other animals like cattle, pigs, ducks, monkeys etc. who were responsible for spreading diseases like zoonosis, tuberculosis, smallpox, human influenza, malaria etc. Poliomyelitis, cholera, typhoid, viral hepatitis A spread due to consumption of polluted water contaminated with feces of sick people.

Period of Matriarchy, saw women taking responsibilities as the head of the family who took care of food, childbirth and health, not only this they became familiar to treatment of wounds and other injuries. Women of this period were regarded as the goddess of health and nature's mother as it is evident from ancient Egyptian and Greek scriptures for example Isis, Hygeia, Anahit etc.

As the ancients evolved into societies, it brought division of labour and medical expertise became the profession of a few individuals such as diviners, herbalists, birth-attenders, bone-setters, healer-priests etc. This period saw the emergence of two main branches of medicine namely magical and empirical. Theories of natural and supernatural reasons of the sickness also appeared during this period.

The theory of natural reasons relied on empirical medicine to cure diseases, injuries, and other illnesses. The empirical medicine practitioners could explain people about natural reasons of diseases and injuries (wound, burns, fractures etc.). They were able to convince people and explain them the natural causes of these diseases were unfavourable climatic

conditions, fatigue, exhaustions, accidents etc. The etiology of several diseases has been explained in this way by empirical medicine. On the contrary, the theory of magical medicine explained the reasons of illness and diseases due to the fury of Gods and other supernatural powers, sin, curse evil spirit, devils etc. Practitioners of magical medicine used to perform different kind of rituals to cure people from diseases and illnesses. Many patients used to die during these rituals, but the ritual performers were never accounted for these deaths. Magical medicine was predominant during this time, only a fraction of the society believed on empirical medicines, and also the number of empirical medicine practitioners were very less during this time as they were regarded as atheists who did not believe in Gods. Magical medicine practitioners used to recommend wearing amulets for protection from evil spirits and negative energy. Till date these rituals of wearing amulets have survived in almost all civilizations.

As the scientific medicine developed, the theory of supernatural causation became insignificant, though many societies and communities have still preserved in their cultures and traditions. For example, in many parts of United States of America, asthma patients sleep on pillows in which a rabbit's tail has been enclosed or smoking Hornets nests. Similarly, in Latin-American traditions snail mucus is ingested for asthma as well as slugs are swallowed alive. Despite advancements in medical science and a generally more progressive understanding of health care in our world, the corpus of magical medicine is old and has survived over generations and millennia.

Dietary therapy, surgical procedures, ritual actions, and herbal therapy were all part of prehistoric medicine. They employed narcotic anaesthetics, diuretics, purgatives, and herbal contraceptives. Poisons were also employed to remove magical energy from the body. Salicylic acid, quinine (for the treatment of malaria), cocaine, colchicine, ephedrine (originally produced from the Ephedra plant, is one of the main pharmaceuticals used to treat asthma), digitalis, and other herbal remedies are examples of ancient medicines that are still used in modern medicine. In addition, they made salicylic acid from willow bark. Acetylsalicylic acid

was created next from salicylic acid (Aspirin). It was soon discovered to be a painkiller as well as a fever reducer and an anti-inflammatory.



Figure 1 Cranial Trepanation

Prehistoric people had a belief system that pain and diseases originated outside the human body. Witch doctors used to exorcise the wicked, but whenever they failed, they resorted to surgical operations that might cure the cure the wicked. Figure 1 shows one such ritual known as

Trepanation-it is one of the very few prehistoric medical practices which is evident from archeological sources. Trepanation involved making a small hole in the skull employing Tumi (ceremonial knife), sharpened seashells, a trephine drill, bronze knife etc. Witch doctors used these procedures to treat headaches, fractures in the skull, epilepsy and mental illnesses. This practice was prevalent in Neolithic Gaul, Africa, Asia, Bohemia, Tahiti, South America, and New Zealand. Trepanation was most popular in Peru, wherein the witch doctors used sharp knives of obsidian, stone and bronze. Archeologists have found skulls with as many as five trepanned holes. Patients who survived these procedures, their wounds were covered with stones, shells, and in many instances' gold and silver. In many parts of Europe, the excised skull bones were worn as amulets to ward off evil spirits and evil eyes. Trepanation is still utilised in medicine today for many conditions. In contemporary medicine, patients with high intracranial pressure, skull fractures, tumours, cysts, brain hematomas (bruises), and Jacksonian seizures undergo trepanation (epilepsy).

Table 1 Medicine of Prehistoric Time

PREMITIVE MEDICINE BEGINNING	Stone Age
CAUSES OF PAIN AND DISEASES ACCORDING TO MAGICAL MEDICINE	evil spirit, sin, the devil, magical power
DISEASES, WHICH SPREAD FROM ANIMALS	from cattle – TB and smallpox, from pigs and ducks – influenza, from primate – malaria, from cats, dogs, hens, rats – salmonellas.
THE BRANCHES OF PREHISTORICAL MEDICINE	1. magical 2. empirical
METHODS OF THERAPY	1. Ritual Actions 2. Diet Therapy 3. Herbal Therapy 4. Surgery (Trepanation, Castration, Skin Scarification)

The Ancient Egyptian Medicine

Nile Valley was one of the most fertile regions in Africa, and the people who settled the Nile Valley, believed that disease and illnesses were inflicted upon them by evil spirits that entered the patient's body through the mouth, ear, nose and devoured

the victim's internal organs. The witch doctors uttered magical spells over the patient's and performed other ritual remedies to overpower these evil spirits and heal the afflicted person. In case of burns, the witch doctors used to worship goddess Isis who had rescued her son Horus from being burned.



Figure 2 Imhotep

Figure 2 depicts the 600 BC statue of Egyptian physician god Imhotep. He died in 2648 BC, was a vizier in the court of Pharaoh Djoser. He functioned as an architect, a physician, a writer, a mathematician, an astronomer, a philosopher, and a priest. For more than 2000 years people sang his praise due to his skills as a doctor. The Pyramid of Pharaoh Djoser was built by Imhotep. Later, he was compared to the Greek god Asclepius. The deity of medicine was Osiris, Tot, or Hermes' aid. He developed 42 sacred Hermetic volumes, of which the first 36 were devoted to magical medicine and the last 6 to empirical medicine, and invented Egyptian hieroglyphics (symbols) that were used in place of letters and words

Egyptian medicine originated approximately 3rd millennium B.C., the archeological sources reveal that the first medical treaties were written during this period. Ancient Egyptians considered Osiris and his wife Isis as deities of medicine, the former being the symbol of life-giving Sun and

later the Nile as the symbol of moon. Ancient Egyptians would often invoke Isis as a provider of magical cures.

The pieces of Hermetic books written by Imhotep have been kept in:

1. Papyri (A very thick paper like material produced from the pith of the papyrus plant)
2. "The book of the Dead".

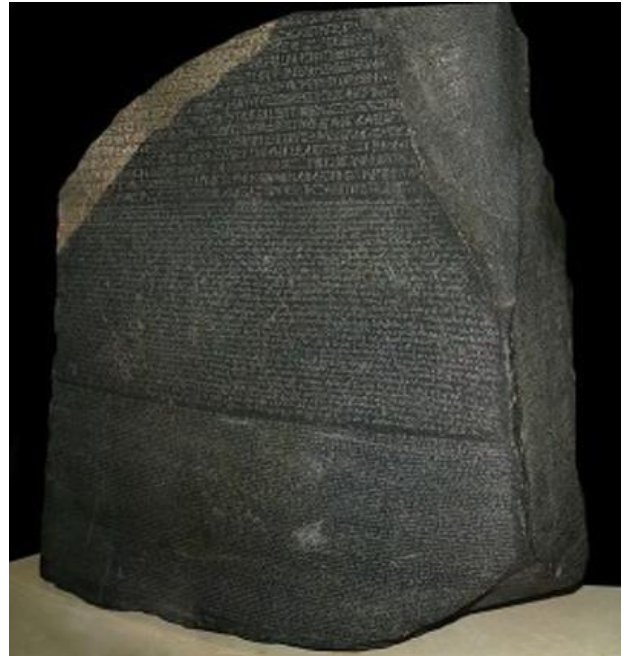


Figure 3 Rosetta Stone

In 1822, Jean-Francois Champollion translated the Rosetta stone (figure 3, dates to 196 B.C.) inscriptions and demonstrated to the world how to read hieroglyphics written by ancient Egyptians. The increased interest in the Egyptology in the early nineteenth century helped to discover many sets of ancient medical documents. The Medical Papyri provided the foundation for our understanding of ancient Egyptian medicine. The following primary papyruses were among them and were well-preserved:

1. The Kahun Papyrus: contains details of problems related to gynecology. There are descriptions of detecting pregnancy and the sex of the child as well;
2. The Smith Papyrus ("The Book of Wounds"): Describes the problems related to anatomy and surgery. This book was written by Imhotep;

3. The Ebes Papyrus: Explains the problems related to therapy, pharmacology, and cosmetology. This book is also known as "The book of medicine for all parts of the body";
4. The Brugsch Papyrus: Explains the problems related to maternal care and pediatrics. It is considered as the first book of pediatrics.

The papyri, though in varying states of preservation, provide us with important information about the ancient Egyptians' understanding of human anatomy and physiology, methods for identifying diseases and injuries, and methods for treating medical conditions by combining elements of magico-religious and rational medicine.

Table 2 Medical papyri of ancient Egypt

Name	Date of Copy (BCE)	Date of discovery	Place of discovery	Location	Content
Kahun papyrus	1825	1889	Kahun, near the Fayoum oasis	London, UK	Gynecological diseases
Edwin Smith Papyrus	1600	1862	Thebes	New York, USA	Medicinal encyclopedia and pharmacopeia
Ebers Papyrus	1550	1873	Thebes	Leipzig, Germany	Ophthalmology, GIT, head, the skin, and urinary tract
Hearst Papyrus	1550	1962	Deir el-Ballas, south Dendera	Berkeley	Practitioner's recipe book
Erman Papyrus	1550	1886	Thebes	Berlin, Germany	Childbirth and infants care
London Papyrus	1300	1860	Thebes	London, UK	61 recipes, 25 of which are medical and 36 are magical
Berlin	1350	1909	Saqqara	Berlin, Germany	Childbirth and infants, heart description and vessels anatomy
Chester Beauty Papyrus	1200	1928	Deir el-Medina	London, UK	Formulary for anal diseases

The Papyri of Edwin Smith and Ebers are few of the most informative medical papyri, wherein a well-organized method of disease diagnosis and treatment is mentioned. The Edwin Smith Papyrus dates to 1600 B.C. written in Middle Egyptian language. The content and approach to medicine mentioned in Edwin Smith Papyrus is one of the best, it is also referred to as the surgical papyrus. It focuses on 48 cases of primarily traumatic head, face, neck, upper thorax, spine, and arm injuries and therapies. It contains just one spell, adheres to empirical understanding, and is an instruction manual rather than merely a list of fixes. The term "information gained from practical

experience: examination, diagnosis and prognosis, and treatment" is the same for every medical case. The main methods of treating wounds that were probably caused by various sorts of weaponry include physical therapy, stitches, and bandages. In the course of time, this papyrus became one of the standard reference texts for treatment in ancient Egypt. According to some scholars, it describes the concurrent responsibilities of the doctor, the priest of Sekhmet, and magicians and includes the earliest documented examination of the pulse. The Edwin Smith Papyrus also contains the earliest description of the blood circulation in humans.

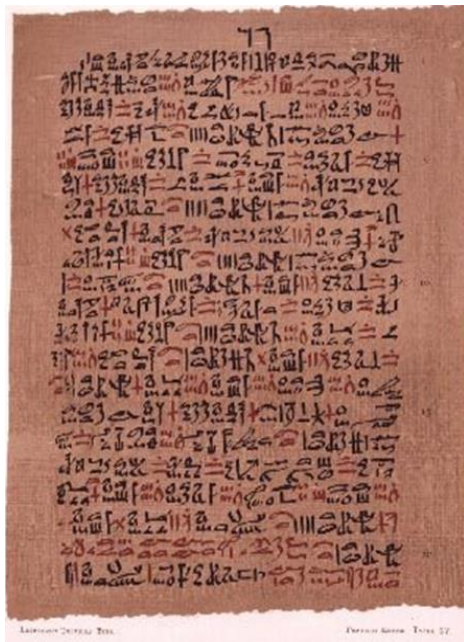


Figure 4 Ebers Papyrus

Image: U.S. National Library of Medicine/National Institutes of Health

The longest and best-preserved medical document is the Ebers Papyrus from 1550 B.C. (fig. 4). The illnesses covered in Ebers Papyrus include 15 diseases related to stomach, 18 diseases related to the anus and the skin, 29 different types of diseases related to the eye, and 18 diseases related to the skin, as well as there are 21 remedies for cough. There is one important section known as “The Book of Vessels”, which emphasizes on the metu. Although there is doubt whether ancient Egyptians had knowledge of neurological systems, the metu is typically considered to be the blood vessels, ducts, tendons, muscles, and possibly the nerves. The metu functions as tubes for substances to pass through and can transfer blood, air, mucus, semen, urine, and illness.

The diseases, injuries and treatments

The most frequently treated conditions included stomach problems, eye illnesses, and stings from snakes and scorpions. Other widespread illnesses were diarrhoea, typhoid, dysentery, smallpox, pneumonia, and silicosis (due to inhaling dust particles). Living rightly, which includes having harmony with the gods, spirits, and the dead, was associated with being in

good health. It was believed that illness resulted from an imbalance, which might then be corrected through rituals, spells, and prayers. Ancient Egyptians might have been the first to understand the circulatory system thought to be the network of vessels (metu) originating from the heart and travelling through the body to all body organs.

According to ancient Egyptians the heart served as the center of the system, where “the metu delivered and received.” Air, water, blood, and body pus or waste (wekhedu), were all moved by this system throughout the body. Ancient Egyptians placed special emphasis on Wekhedu. As wekhedu circulated through the circulatory system, an accumulation of waste occasionally manifested as pus in blisters or sores. In order to treat this, the wounds were kept dry and clean subsequently wrapped with honey and copper salts. To prevent wekhedu from building up, doctors advised utilising enemas, emetics, and body cleansing. Since the ancient Egyptians thought Thoth created enemas, they had a divine origin.

In the Edwin Smith and Ebers papyri, it has been mentioned that there were two opinions on treatment, the doctors would either treat, “contend with,” or “not treat”. Depending on how certain the doctor was that the injuries could be treated, they used to treat the patient otherwise they used to prescribe them other forms of medicine which might have suited them. Even if a patient couldn't be treated by any form of medicine, care was still provided and they were kept comfortable until they passed away. Medical classifications were performed based on symptoms rather than diseases, though there number of opinions regarding the causes and nature of diseases. Traumatic injuries had a clear cause, making it easy to diagnose them and provide a predictable course of action.

Internal diseases including heart and lung ailments had unpredictable results because they had little or no knowledge for the cause of illness. In these situations, the use of incantations, spells, and amulets was widespread and frequently

combined with drug use. Benign deities would be trusted to treat the condition if it was thought that the disease had a supernatural cause. Ancient Egyptians invoked many deities to prevent and cure diseases and sometimes to ward off the attacks by wild animals. Often times, incantations were used to directly cure the disease or invoking the disease demon to cure the ailment. Additionally, incantations were used to increase the effectiveness of remedies which were specifically related to particular disease or drug. They received an infusion of heka, which included the speech-related element. According to Egyptian belief, the "divine creative word and magical energy" could make ideas come true and so neutralise or repel negative energies. Since spells and incantations frequently had "sympathetic" purpose, the ancient physician would have found them to be practical and logical.

Use of magical medicines one of which involved wearing amulets to address health issues was common in ancient Egyptian people. Many of these amulets had resemblance to living creatures including humans or specific body parts of animals, the intent behind was that the wearer would assimilate the desired characteristics of that particular body part, such as gaining strength or improving eyesight.

Health-related issues were also addressed through the use of amulets. Many amulets were made to imitate live things (human or animal) or certain bodily parts with the hope that the wearer would absorb the desired quality, such as strength or keen vision. A lot of individuals also used amulets to guard themselves from injury, such as animal bites. It was believed that the amulet's composition and design would offer the wearer both healing and protection. Even anything that touched amulets were thought to have healing properties. Many people have worn amulets throughout history and in various cultures. People thought, it would protect them from animal harm and that it would provide healing and other forms of protection.

Physicians often prescribed medicines made from animals, minerals, plant and vegetable-based

substances for treating various forms of diseases and injuries. While many of the terminology in the ancient Egyptian pharmacopoeia have not yet been translated, it was nevertheless fairly comprehensive. The effectiveness of certain drugs was not always clear because they were frequently used in combination with other substances and elements, or they were used with magic on occasion. Oil, honey, milk, beer, and wine were among the ingredients used to prepare various medicines.

Five different methods of drug administration were used: orally, rectally, vaginally, externally, and through fumigation. They were administered as cakes, enemas, suppositories, mouth rinses, drops, ointments, tablets, or special baths. Prescriptions were frequently written based on the patient's weight and age. Incantations usually recited by the physicians while they wrote or administered medicines. Drugs which were made from animals or animal body parts included honey, milk, blood, placenta, bile, fat, meat, liver, hearts, lungs and other internal organs. Honey was used in abundance as it had antibacterial and antifungal properties, probably they had somehow found its properties. Honey was also used as additive for many drugs, for being flavourful and sweet in taste. Honey was administered both orally, especially as a cough suppressant, and topically, for varied types of wounds. Use of milk as medicine was also in practice, it made easier to swallow drugs and other ingredients prescribed by the physicians, though most of the times milk was used as an enema or applied to skin to make it look fair. Milk was used to relieve throat discomforts and respiratory problems. Animal fat was used to make a viscous ointment as well as to represent important animal traits like strength. They also applied honey or oil bandages to get quick healing from sprains or swellings.

Ancient Egyptians used many mineral based drugs for example natron, table salt, malachite, lapis lazuli, imru, and gypsum. Natron, which was frequently administered with bandages, was predominantly helpful in drawing out fluid and

minimising swelling. Malachite served as the foundation for the green eye paint that was frequently applied to address eye conditions that were common owing to flies, dust, and sand. Malachite has been used to treat burns and inflammation since it is a natural antibacterial. Nevertheless, it is doubtful that ancient Egyptians knew these properties of minerals or they might have been influenced by the aesthetic characteristics of the minerals.

The ancient Egyptians made use of the plants and herbs that were at hand, including lettuce, barley, acacia, linseed, onions, mint, dates, dill, willow, aloe vera, mustard seeds, and garlic. One plant that we still use to treat sunburns and other skin conditions is Aloe Vera. Today, we also used peppermint or mint to help with gastrointestinal problems. Many medicinal plants which have been mentioned in ancient Egyptian texts have become extinct from the Nile Valley. Ancient Egyptians were aware of cannabis, and they even used hemp to produce rope. Cannabis was used as medicine and could be administered through mouth, rectum, vagina, by fumigation, as bandages on skin, and applied to the eyes to cure eye sores. Cannabis is hardly mentioned in any of the medical papyri. However, it is unclear that Egyptians had any knowledge as to how cannabis affects the human nervous system.

Detailed documentation is not available in case of surgery, though there is mention of routine operations like removing tumours, dressing wounds, or treating traumatic injuries like fractures. Only a few specimens of human remain demonstrate that the ancient Egyptians were aware of trepanation, which was used to reduce brain swellings or at many instances' headaches. Linen sutures or bandages were frequently used to repair wounds. Because they did not have enough knowledge of anaesthetics, deep internal surgeries were rarely performed. The ancient Egyptian medical papyri mention few of the instruments which were generally employed during surgeries include tweezers, lancets, drills, retractors, hooks, and tools for dentistry. Archeological excavations have revealed that ancient Egyptians filled tooth

cavities with some kind of mixed resins and copper, which were drilled into the jawbones to remove tooth abscesses, though tooth extraction has never been mentioned in any of the medical papyri.

Ancient Egyptians regarded snakes with great horror. The Brooklyn Museum Papyri concentrate on this topic, in contrast to the Edwin Smith Papyrus and the Ebers Papyrus, which only briefly mention this topic. The existing copy of the text dates to 600-400 B.C., though the original text might have been written as early as the Old Kingdom. There are mentions of twenty-one snakes and at least one chameleon by the medical papyri, which clearly explains the effects of different types of snake bites, along with the diagnosis and cure. The snake bites were generally cured using herbs or incantations. These treatments were mostly intended to alleviate pain and reduce swelling rather than preventing the absorption of the venom. Onions were abundantly used to cure snake bites, which was often mixed with mineral salts and sweet beer. On numerous occasions this mix was applied along with incantations. Emetic agents were also prescribed to induce nausea and vomiting to expel the snake venom. The kharep priests of Serket were considered as having the power to heal snake bites and scorpion stings.

Conclusions

It may be concluded that ancient Egyptians had vast knowledge of both the branches of medicine as well as varied medical fields including surgery, anatomy, and inoculation against smallpox. They had gained expertise in diagnosis and treatment, and used some of the advanced medical tools to cure the ailments. The ancient medical papyri have mentioned thousands of medical cases including symptoms and cure. They used plants and plant-based products, animals and animal products, and minerals as therapeutics to treat the illnesses and injuries. Egyptian medicine occupied a dominant place in the ancient world for about 2500 years. This article is an attempt to understand some information about the history of Egyptian medicine.

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