

# **The Black Death**

The cause of death for 50 million people from Europe

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Historical paper

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During the middle ages in Europe the population encountered the deadly Bubonic plague as it was exchanged among traders and spread among the general public. The disease wiped out hundreds of thousands, because of the lack of medical understanding, and urged an exploration into how to stop the disease.

The Black Death started in the shores of Europe around 1346 by fleas who have attached themselves to returning sailors that came back from other countries. Many believed it came from China and started to spread through other countries and the finally Europe. The disease would be able to spread by a single breath or even a single touch on someone's clothing. It spread to millions in weeks no medicine or remedy could stop the Black Death.

The plague was presented itself by three different forms. Bubonic the first form and the most common, starts by bumps on the groin, armpits, and neck. The bumps can get as big as an apple or as small as an egg. The second form is pneumatic plague and it attacks the respiratory system and can infect someone by the exhaled air of another victim with the plague. The next and finally form of the Black Death is septicemic version of the Black Death. The septicemic attacks the blood system inside the body. Not many survived the plague but when they do live through pain and agony there life expectancy may be a few days or at most a week.

In different parts of the world the symptoms were not the same as in Europe. For other countries the plague showed itself as a gush of blood from the nose, but everyone got the bubonic part of the plague. The disease has many names and one of them is bubonic because victims of the Black Death or Bubonic plague got boils on there neck, armpits, and groin. Inside victims bodies were tumors. After time the tumours would turn into black or dark purple spot or boils giving the name The Black Death. When a victim gets these spots or tumours that was a sign of death.

Victims of the plague thought it was the end of the world and life as they knew it so they did criminal and foolish things. Many thought of it as harmless and something that would pass, but as thousands started to die panic rose. The poor couldn't get medical help and must live on the street passing it to anyone nearby. When hundreds of thousands of people's died off people's went to crazy measures before they would die. People who weren't sick would party like it was there last day and many got infected that way. Many jobs weren't tended to so the crops they needed for food was dieing off from the plague and lack of water. Also livestock died out leaving many hungry. Many of the infected did criminal activities such as breaking into other people's houses, stealing, and execution.

Doctors advise and medicine could not stop or slow down and ease the plague. Groups of people not knowing what to do or how to stop the plague decided that they stop or make a cure for the plague. Doctors used different kind of remedies and treatments to slow down or stop the disease like lying down on your side to keep the blood flowing, using human blood and feces with flower residue for a medicine on the lumps, or even popping the boils every day. Priest came in and blessed the victim everyday but it never worked. None of this was successful in anyway and the best it was doing was giving victims a few more days of agonising pain. In the end of the plague killed 30 to 60 percent of Europe in just 7 years.

Some reasons why the plague spread is because the plague could be transported by air and blood. The plague was airborne and it couldn't be stopped. Infected roam the street and also did the ones who brought the disease over, rats and fleas. Many did not want to get infected by locking themselves in their homes and abandoning their own kids and loved ones. Many crops were not watched because that person was killed by the plague. Families had to attend their deceased family members land leaving too much work and responsibility for others. But rats and fleas roamed free they got into people's houses and infected village by village. Important people like the pope, king or any other important person, would be lock in a room with enough food and water to live until the plague died off.

Christians would punish jews for the plague thinking it was sign from god and he wasn't pleased. They tormented jewish people by killing or torturing them for the plague. Christians would secretly poison jews and burn houses because of the Black Death. Many people would walk on the street whipping each other and killing each other thinking god is mad at them and the plague was there sin. There were different groups who reacted to the plague calmly by walking around the village carrying flowers, scented herbs, and perfumes, believing excellent things would comfort the brain with nice smelling odours. People who still didn't have the plague was criticizing Jews, Lepers, and other minorities, for starting the plague and thousands were burned and killed alive in retaliation against them.

Citizens avoided one another, neighbors didn't visit each other or ask for supplies. Such terror was struck into the hearts of every man, woman, and child. Uncle turned on nephew, brother on brother, father on son, even wife turned on husband. The worse thing about this is that if a child contained the plague the mother and father would leave him like he wasn't even theirs. It spread like wildfire and it was infecting thousands of people with families and friends who turned on one another. Many would raid each other buildings and houses for their loot and money because everyone knew that they would die soon, so they lost all sense and manners.

Every infected was on his own without any medical care or support, except the charity from friends but this was a rarity. Doctors started to die out and stopped helping the sick so many rich or middle class person would use a servant. Everything started to cost three times the price it used to be, like servants were getting really greedy, even though the job they tended to was to bring the sick demands of watch over them as the die. But the return the servants got was death waiting around the corner for them.

The fear and unreal notions took possession of the the living that almost everyone came to the same conclusion and that was to avoid the sick at any cost and everything that belonged to the victims. Also many would be selfish and lock themselves in a room or there house and sit their and ignore the sick and even their loved ones who needed most of the help.

Middle class and lower was people who is the most pitiful to behold. Most of the middle and lower class would stay in their homes, either through poverty or hope of safety of their lives. Those people didn't get any medical care so they died by the thousands usually because of starvation or the Black Death itself. Many of the middle and lower class men and woman would roam the street and would die there. Other would know when those people would be dead when they walk past their home and smell their decaying bodies.

The people who had to bury their loved one or friends usually contracted the Black Death like that. First they would bury them in graves. But when millions started to die out the living would just make a ditch to hold thousands of victims of the Black Death who have died. Since workers and servants would have little cash and have to bury many they didn't know that had the plague just for the price of cash they would get. But like always whenever the uninfected living carried and buried many people who had the Black Death it would always end up the same, the servants would die in a week.

Family members and friends would take each other into churches every day and almost every hour and there was not enough burial grounds for the dead inside of graveyards. Although the burial was full many were forced to dig huge trenches to house the victims of the Black Death. Day after day many would do nothing but dig and bury dig and bury until the trenches were full leaving only about 40% of the population of Europe with low food and water supplies. In the end 50 million dead and 60% of Europe destroyed because of The Black Death.

