

#### 4. What types of remedies were used in the middle ages and who made them?

In the Middle Ages there were all different kinds of remedies such as:

- Folk Remedies, these include:
  - To cure ague swallow a spider wrapped in a raisin
  - To cure baldness rub goose droppings over the affected area.
  - Tie an eel skin around the knee to alleviate cramps
  - To cure a toothache, touch a dead man's tooth
  - St. John's Wort was most effective for curing fever if found by accident, especially on Midsummer's Eve.

Just to name a few

- Medicinal plants, these include:
  - Aloe- this was used for wounds, haemorrhoids, ulcers, laxative and hair loss.
  - Angelica- was used to keep witches away, also as a cough remedy. It is said if the cough as phlegm use horehound, the root of fennel, radish, wild celery and anise.
  - Anise- this was recommended by doctors as a breath freshener, digestive aid, a cure for hiccups, headache, asthma, insomnia, nausea, lice and infant colic.
  - Apple- you were to eat a raw apple at the sign of sickness if you were a healthy person.
  - Balm- was used for nervousness and anxiety as well as insomnia, arthritis, headache, toothache, sores, digestive problems and cramps.
  - Basil- this is used for stomach ailments.
  - Blackberry- was used to treat Gout, bleeding gums, smooth skin burns and dysentery.
  - Buckthorn- was used as a laxative, it also treated jaundice, haemorrhoids, gout and arthritis.
  - Burdock- was used to treat leprosy, it was also used later to help cancer tumours. It was also used for fever, ringworm and skin infections.
  - Caraway- used for the help of indigestion, gas and infant colic.
  - Chamomile- used to help headaches, kidney, liver and bladder problems .
  - Cinnamon- is used for colds, flu, cancer and "inner decay and slime".
  - Comfrey- was used to help broken bones and respiratory and gastrointestinal problems.
  - Rosemary- improved your memory.

Just to name a few. A Physician prescribed these treatments.

#### Blood letting-

In the middle ages a lot of disease were thought to be caused by an abundance of blood in the body. Blood letting was turned to cure this problem. If a lot of blood had to be taken out a vein would be cut open. If only a small amount was required a leech was used. Blood letting was also used to clean the blood. It was used for a reason but at times for no reason at all. Blood letting in the end became a habit and was thought to be relaxing. The first time you blood let it was thought it saved a persons life.

#### Black Plague-

When someone had the black plague in the Middle Ages in was sometimes thought they had sinned. Self-punishment was seen as the answer in the Middle Ages.

The Cloister and gardens existed in the Middle Ages and were used to grow herbs and plants and were labelled with their uses.

In the Middle Ages they were very superstitious and some believed in lucky charms and would hang them from the door to preserve eyesight, cure lunacy and keep fatigue away on long journeys. The four leaf clover is an example of this still used today for good luck.

This in an example of an incantation used in the middle ages:

"In an incantation for a fever, found in R. Campbell Thompson's Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia, I found the instructions for the incantation against a fever:

*"The sick man ... thou shalt place  
.....thou shalt cover his face  
With cypress and herbs.....  
That the great gods may remove the evil  
That the evil spirit may stand aside  
.....  
May a kindly spirit a kindly genius be present."\**

Many drugs used in the Middle Ages came from the orient via Venice. Venetian vessels brought cinnamon from Ceylon, opium from Smyrna, rhubarb from China, pepper from India, ginger, benjamin, myrrh.