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0521552265 - Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680

Andrew Wear

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Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550–1680

This is a major synthesis of the knowledge and practice of early modern English medicine in their social and cultural contexts. The book maps out vividly some central areas: remedies (and how they were made credible), notions of disease, advice on preventive medicine and on healthy living, how surgeons worked upon the body and their understanding of what they were doing, and the prevention and treatment of plague.

The structures of practice and knowledge examined in the first part of the book came to be challenged in the later seventeenth century, when the ‘new science’ began to overturn the foundation of established knowledge. However, as the second part of the book shows, traditional medical practice was so well entrenched in English culture that much of it continued into the eighteenth century. Various changes which set the agenda for later medical treatment did, however, occur, and these are discussed in the final chapter.

ANDREW WEAR is Senior Lecturer in the History of Medicine, University College London and the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. He was editor of *Medicine in Society: Historical Essays* (1992) and joint author of *The Western Medical Tradition* (1995), and a volume of his collected essays has been published under the title *Health and Healing in Early Modern England* (1998).

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In memory of my grandfather
Spiridon A. Malaspina
1890–1983

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