

A familiar tune...

Ring around the rosy
A pocket full of posies

Ashes, Ashes

We all fall down!



THE BLACK PLAGUE



WHAT IS A PLAGUE???

A terrible disease that spreads quickly

THE CULPRIT...

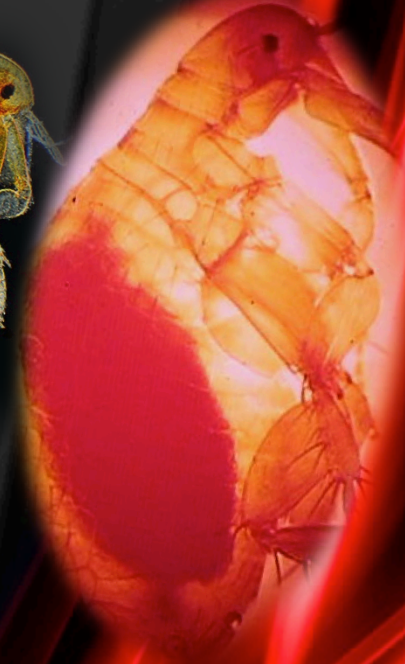
- **Oriental Rat Flea**

- blood sucking parasite
- transferred disease
from the black rat to humans

- **Did You Know?**

- has 2 eyes; can only see bright light
- 1/16 inch long
- mouth used: sucking up blood
- Wingless

- For example: known to make leaps up to **13 inches**, about 200 times the length of their own bodies. *This would be equal to a 900 foot jump by a six-foot man!!*



HOW IT WORKS...



Flea drinks rat blood that carries the bacteria



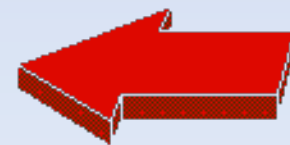
Bacteria multiply in flea's gut



Human is infected



Flea bites human, regurgitates blood into open wound



Gut clogged with bacteria

WHY DID IT SPREAD SO QUICKLY???

- black rats carried the fleas on their backs— on ships
- airborne bacteria coughed up by infected humans
- Poor sanitary conditions
 - sewage in streets
 - unclean water/bathrooms





SCIENTISTS TODAY SAY

Today, scientists understand that the Black Death, is spread by a bacillus called *Yersinia pestis*. (The French biologist Alexandre Yersin discovered this germ at the end of the 19th century.)

They know that the bacillus travels from person to person through the air, as well as through the bite of infected fleas and rats.

Both of these pests could be found almost everywhere in medieval Europe, but they were particularly at home aboard ships of all kinds

WASN'T IT OBVIOUS?

- Today, this grim sequence of events is terrifying but comprehensible. In the middle of the 14th century, however, there seemed to be no rational explanation for it.
 - No one knew exactly how the Black Death was transmitted from one patient to another



IT WENT SOMETHING LIKE THIS...



Day 1 Painful swellings called buboes appeared in the victim's armpits and groin. These were usually about the size of an egg, but could sometimes be as big as an apple.



Day 4 The disease attacked the nervous system. This caused the victim to suffer spasms. The victim was in terrible pain.



Day 2 The victim vomited and developed a fever.



Day 5 Sometimes the buboes burst and a foul-smelling black liquid oozed from the open boils. When this happened the victim usually lived. However, in most cases the victim suffered a painful death.



Day 3 Bleeding under the skin caused dark blotches all over the body.

•Victims usually only lived 4-7 days

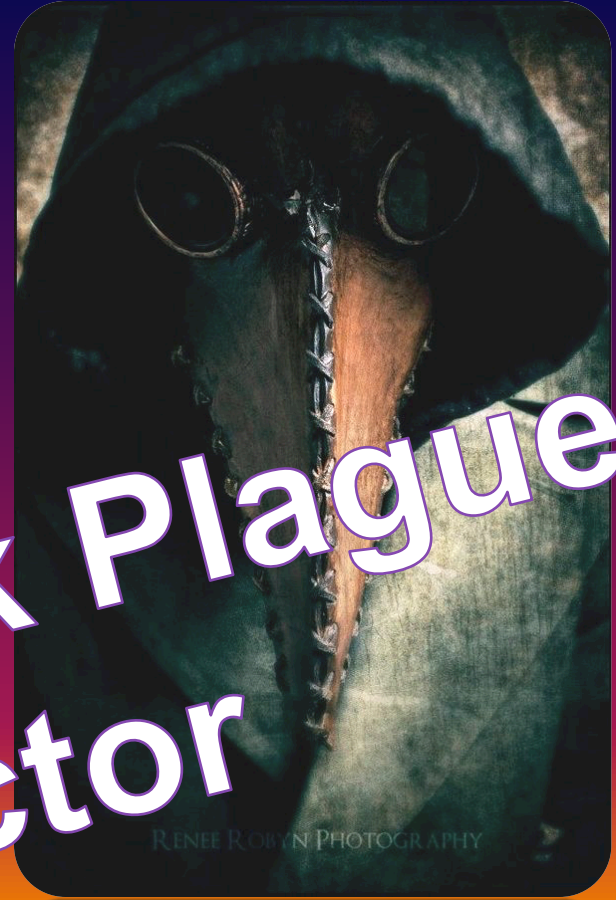
NOT A KODAK

MOMENT....



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THE DOCTOR IS IN....



The Black Plague Doctor

RENEE ROBYN PHOTOGRAPHY

THE SPREAD



75 to 200 million people and peaking in Europe in the years 1346–53.

“CURES”



Nice try...

- scents to ward of deadly vapors
- dipped handkerchiefs in oils
- purchased charms/spells from local wise woman
- rubbed hot onions on the sores
- having leaches/pigeons suck the blood from the buboes
- bloodletting



Two thumbs up...

- Walled up houses (healthy & sick)
- burning bodies (heat destroyed the bacteria)



EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT

"One citizen avoided another, hardly any neighbor troubled about others, relatives never or hardly ever visited each other. Moreover, such terror was struck into the hearts of men and women by this calamity, that brother abandoned brother, and the uncle his nephew, and the sister her brother, and very often the wife her husband. What is even worse and nearly incredible is that fathers and mothers refused to see and tend their children, as if they had not been theirs."

