

Y9 SPR1 Knowledge Organiser – Topic Three: Medicine in 18th and 19th century Britain

18th and 19th century Britain

This was a time of breakthroughs in medicine in England. There were many scientific discoveries but also many Public Health problems.

Key events

1798 – Edward Jenner developed the first vaccine for Smallpox

1847 – James Simpson developed chloroform as an anaesthetic

1854 – John Snow's maps proved the source of cholera

1861 – Louis Pasteur's germ theory was published

1867 – Lister used antiseptic to prevent infection

1875 – The Public Health Act. Local councils had to provide sewers, drainage and fresh water as well as medical officers

1882 Robert Koch identified bacteria that caused specific diseases

Key Concepts

Nursing – Nurses are responsible for the care of patients in hospital. Before 1800, hospitals were dangerous places where death was very likely. The development of nursing changed that.

Breakthrough – a scientific discovery that dramatically alters the way people understood disease – e.g. the discovery of bacteria. This then helps the problem to be solved.

Public Health – when the government takes measures to prevent diseases spreading and to help the population become healthier. The government increasingly took on this role after the development of germ theory

Tier Three Key Words

Vaccine	The injection into the body of killed or weakened organisms to give the body resistance against disease
Smallpox	A dangerous disease causing fever that was beaten by vaccination
Anaesthetic	Drugs given to make someone unconscious before or after surgery
Infection	The formation of disease causing germs
Cholera	A bacterial infection caused by drinking water
Germ Theory	The theory that germs cause disease
Antiseptic	Chemicals used to destroy bacteria and prevent infection
Medical Officer	A person appointed to look after the public health of an area
Contagion	The passing of disease from one person to another
Epidemic	A widespread outbreak of a disease
Sanitation	Providing disposal of human waste and dispensing clean water to improve public health
Workhouses	Accommodation for poor people who could not afford to pay for rent and food.
Dispensary	A place where medicines are given out
Voluntary hospital	Hospitals supported by charitable donations
Chloroform	A liquid whose vapour acts as an anaesthetic and produces unconsciousness
Industrial Revolution	A period of British history when industries (e.g. coal, steel) transformed society

