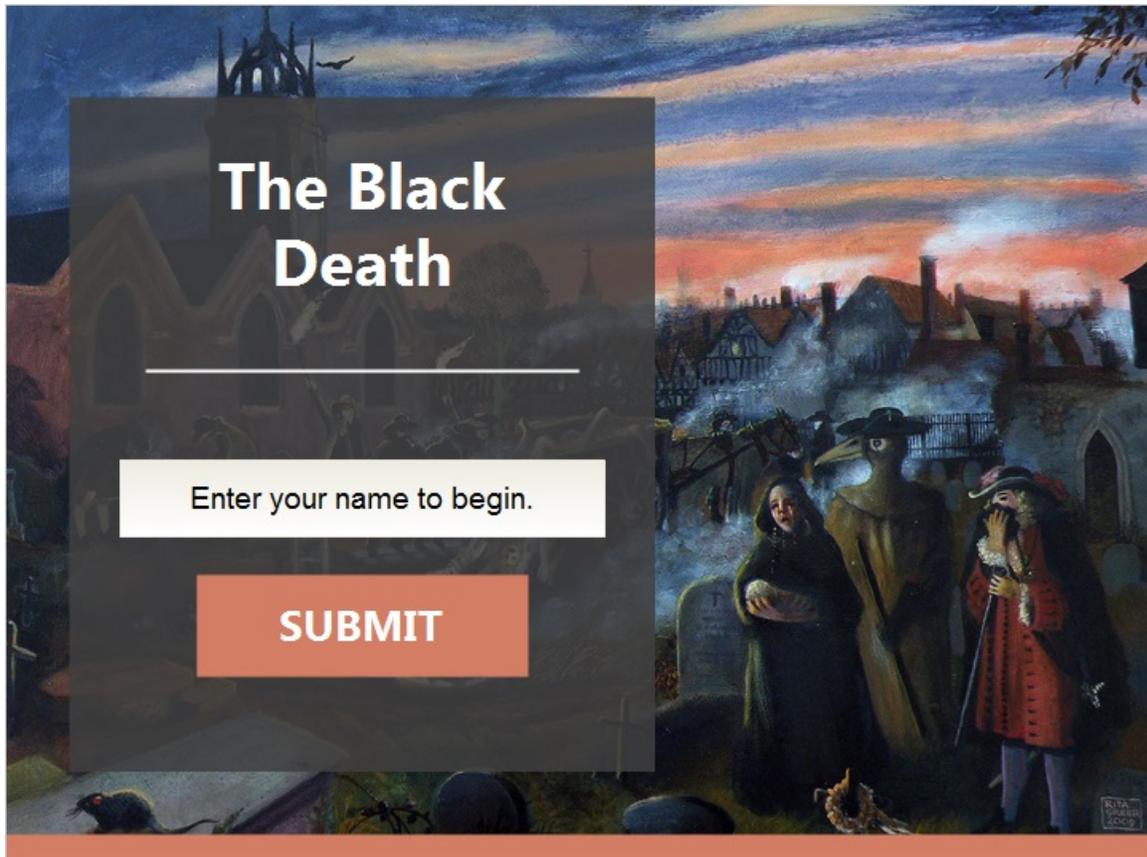


Module 11: The High Middle Ages

Topic 3 Content: The Black Death

Introduction



Imagine you are an Italian doctor in 1347 A.D. (C.E.). You aren't sure why, but all of a sudden, people in your community are coming to you with inflammations of lymph nodes and a fever. After weeks of these symptoms, along with vomiting, these people are dying. Enter your name in the space provided. Then click SUBMIT to try and figure out what exactly is happening to your sick patients.

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Doctor's Uniform

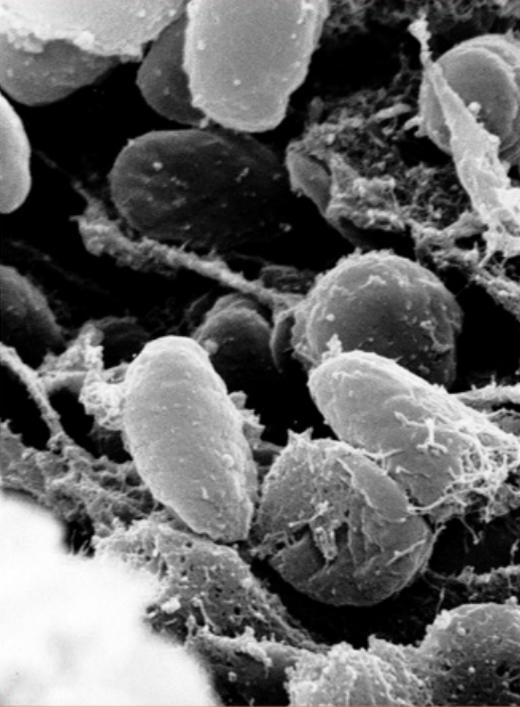


Thank you for coming, doctor. Here, put on this uniform like the one I have. While it looks a bit unusual, it will help protect you against infection. The mask will cover your head and neck, the two glass eyes and beak are stuffed with herbs to purify the air you breathe, and the leather gloves will protect your hands, as well as the thick material of the uniform that is covered with wax.

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Symptoms of the Black Death



Symptoms of the Black Death

What are you seeing?

- Buboes
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Death in two-to-seven days
- People fleeing
- Spreading infection
- Warmer months

CONTINUE

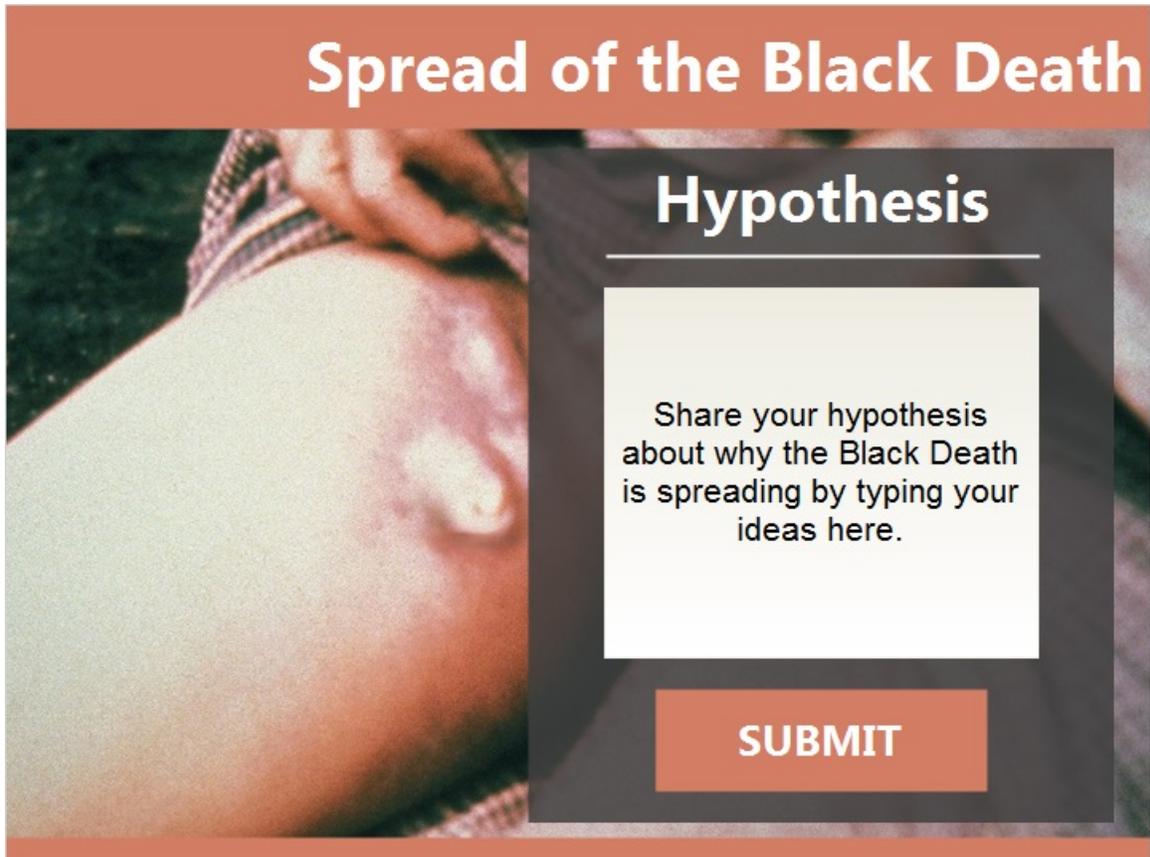
Now that you are protected, let's talk about what has been happening in our community. I imagine we have seen similar symptoms in our patients. One of the most common symptoms of the Black Death is the appearance of buboes, or an inflammation of the lymph nodes. These buboes can appear in the neck, armpits, or groin. Later symptoms include vomiting and fever. Most victims have been dying within two-to-seven days, but not all sufferers are showing symptoms right away, or even for weeks.

When the plague first broke out, many fled. When people started traveling from place to place without realizing they were sick, others got infected. Have you also noticed the plague spreading faster during warmer months but lying dormant during the winter? Local authorities have even occasionally suspended public events, like theater performances, in an effort to thwart further spread of the disease.

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Prediction



The graphic features a background image of a person's arm with a large, dark, necrotic lesion, characteristic of the Black Death. Overlaid on the right side is a dark grey rectangular box. At the top of this box is the word "Hypothesis" in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below it is a white rectangular text input area containing the instruction: "Share your hypothesis about why the Black Death is spreading by typing your ideas here." At the bottom of the dark grey box is an orange rectangular button with the word "SUBMIT" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Have you thought about why the Black Death is spreading? Share your hypothesis with me by typing your ideas in the space provided. Then click SUBMIT.

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Spread of the Black Death

Spread of the Black Death



How did this happen?

Land and sea
Trade routes and conquests



Dirty streets with rats

CONTINUE

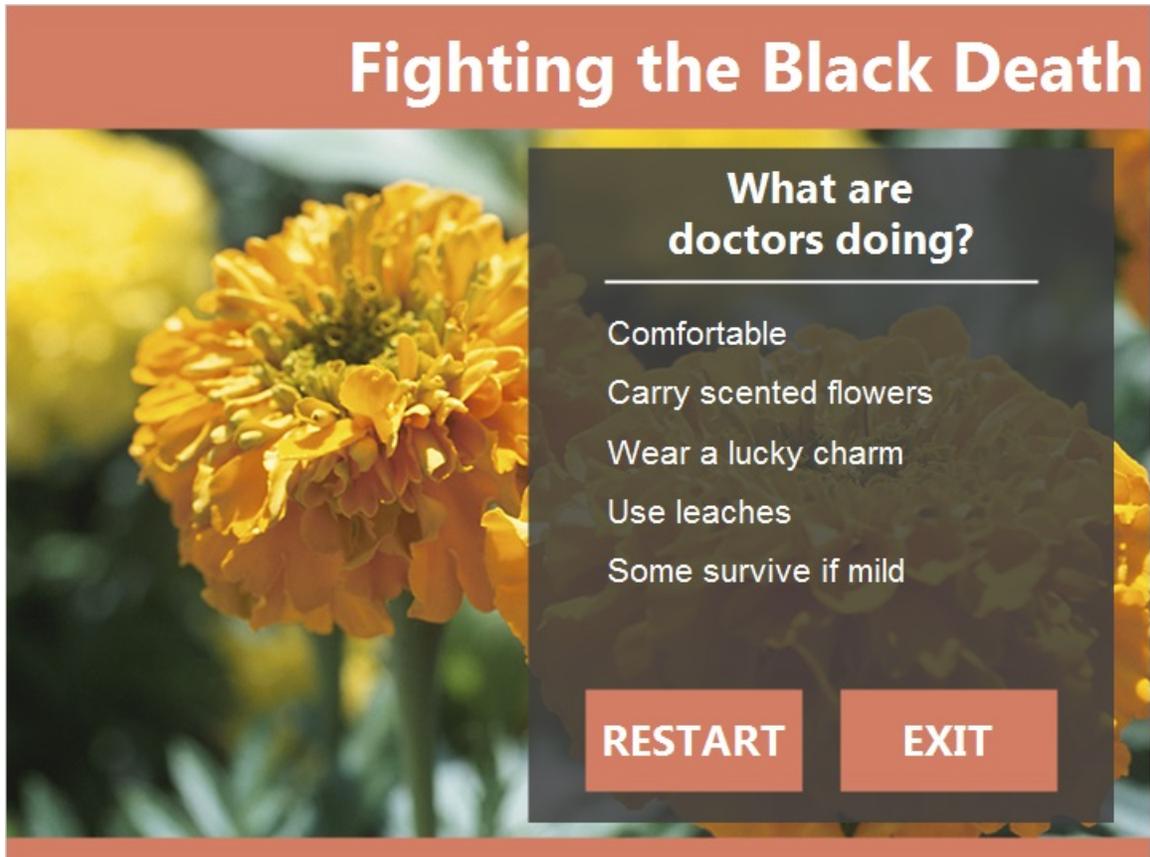
The plague has spread by land and sea, over trade routes and through conquests. Likely, the plague first reached Europe via a merchant ship that came into Italy in 1347 A.D. (C.E.). Click on the map to view the animation of how the Black Death quickly spread throughout Europe.

During this time, sanitary conditions are poor. Rats are always a problem on ships, and infected rats have found their way aboard ships in Asia that were bound for Europe. The streets in Europe are dirty, and animals freely roam. This lack of cleanliness has contributed to the spread of the plague. Eventually these rats will be killed by the thousands, as shown in the image.

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Fighting the Black Death



As doctors, we must come up with cures and treatments for the bubonic plague. Right now, we are only able to make those infected by the plague comfortable and hope for the best. What we have tried so far does not seem effective, like asking victims to carry scented flowers, wear a lucky charm, or use leeches to remove infected blood. Of course some victims have survived mild cases of the Black Death, and some have managed to avoid being infected.

Thank you for your consultation doctor. We certainly have a lot to think about so the Black Death does not spread any farther throughout Europe.