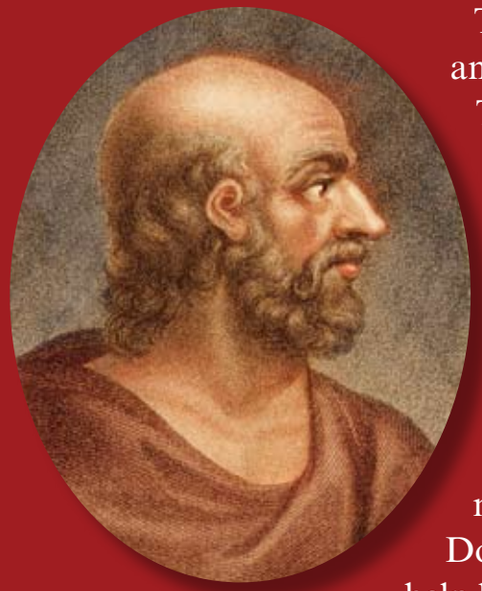
A Man Ahead of His Time



The field of medicine has seen great men and women. The great ones change the world. They improve lives. They have something in common, too. They use good judgment when making difficult decisions.

Hippocrates (hih-PAHK-ruh-teez) was a Greek doctor. He was also a free thinker. He changed the world of medicine. He had great insights. For this, he is called The Father of Medicine. Until he practiced medicine, there was little science in medicine. Doctors performed rituals they thought would help healing.

Hippocrates' work changed many areas of medicine. He changed the study of the structure of the human body. He changed the study of how the body works. He also changed the study of mental and emotional health.

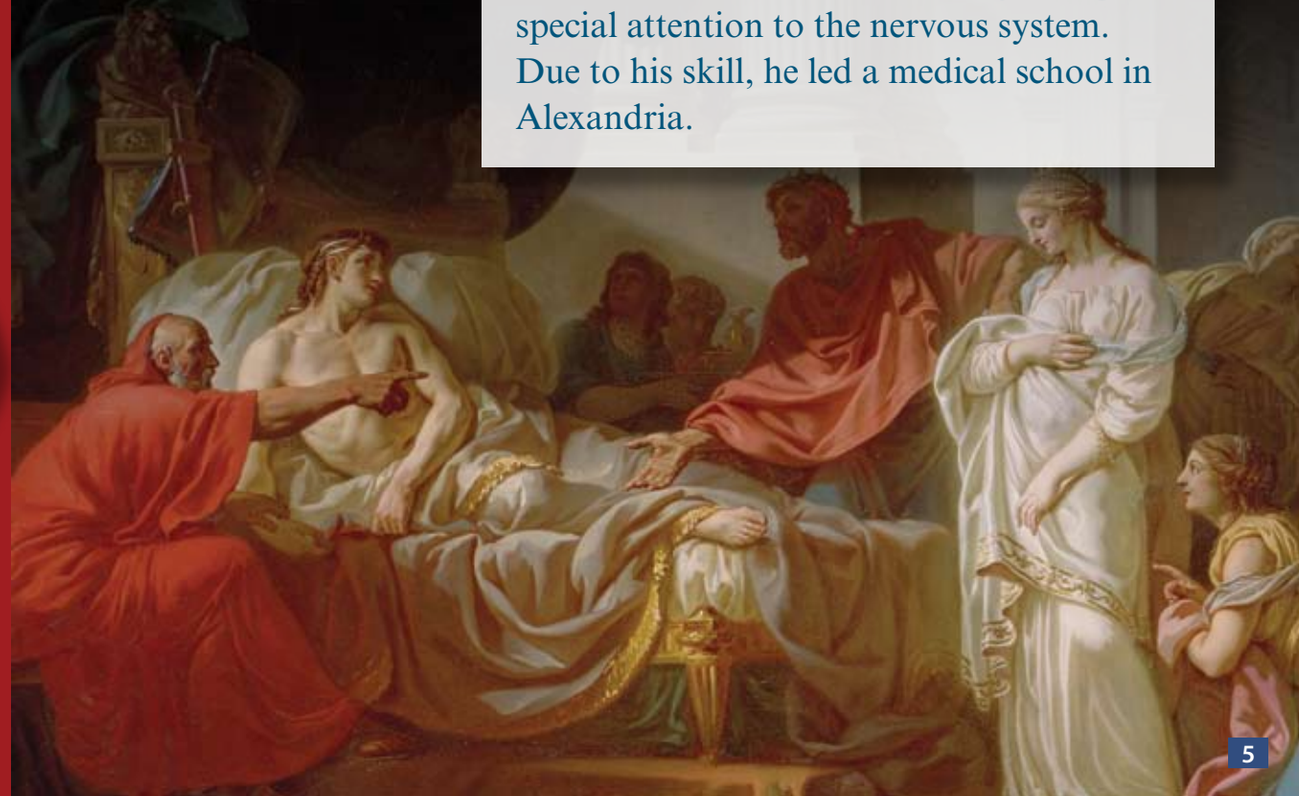
"Magical" Medicine

Before medicine was developed, people tried to use magic to heal the sick. They thought everything happened because of angry gods or evil spirits. They believed that illness was a punishment from the gods. Surgery was performed to give evil spirits a way to escape. People drilled holes in the head to heal headaches and mental problems!

Erasistratus

Erasistratus (er-uh-SIS-truh-tuhs) was born in Ceos, an island in Greece. He lived from about 330 B.C. to 250 B.C. He was a doctor. He is best known for healing the king's son, who had nervous depression. The prince was in love, but there were things in the way of him being with the one he loved. Erasistratus helped the prince unite with his love. He was healed.

Erasistratus also studied human **anatomy**. He was especially devoted to the **dissection** of the human body. He gave special attention to the nervous system. Due to his skill, he led a medical school in Alexandria.



Hippocrates' Early Years

Hippocrates was born on an island called Kos. Kos is in a corner of the Aegean Sea. Hippocrates was born around 460 B.C. He lived for more than 90 years. His work lives on today.

Hippocrates had a pleasant childhood. Like today, children then liked to play. They played many of the same games children play today. Hippocrates had tops, balls, and toy animals as a boy. He also had pet dogs and cats, just as children today might have.

It is believed Hippocrates stayed on the island for his schooling. His studies were divided into two parts. One was physical education and the other was mental discipline. He learned to read, write, and spell. The Greeks believed that this prepared young men for citizenship and leadership.

Greece

Greece is made up of a peninsula and surrounding islands. The climate is mild and pleasant. Greeks long ago and today can farm and fish easily. Because of these qualities, and because of its prime location, Greece became a center for trade and the center of civilization. It was a good place for Hippocrates to study and learn.

Horse Master

Hippocrates is a Greek name. It means "horse master."