



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Medicine in Myths and Tales

2425-2-H4101D217

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#### Aims

Main aim of the course is to introduce students to the historical evolution of medicine, by analyzing myths and tales belonging to different historical periods.

#### Contents

Myths and traditions, as expressions of popular beliefs, can provide valuable information on health and medical knowledge in the ancient world, and sometimes can be more useful than the writings of ancient physicians. These non- medical sources are often used by historians and anthropologists to better understand the evolution of medicine over the centuries. This course will describe some examples of myths and legends belonging to the different historical periods and containing medical issues. Furthermore it will provide examples of medical doctrines of the past, based on mistaken beliefs, that have remained in clinical practice and in public opinion until the contemporary age.

#### Detailed program

The use of myths and legends in the history of medicine - Myths of ancient civilizations - The medieval legends – myths and tales of the Romantic Age - medicine and fairy tales – Medical curiosities (spontaneous human combustion, ftiriasis, maternal imagination, lunatism. vampirism etc.) - Myths of Twentieth Century

#### Prerequisites

Second Year Medical Students and above.

## **Teaching form**

2 lectures of 3.5 hours each are conducted in a lecture format at the beginning, aimed at engaging students interactively in the subsequent part.

All activities are conducted in person.

The language is Italian

## **Textbook and teaching resource**

Bondeson J. A cabinet of Medical curiosities. Cornell University, 1997

## **Semester**

Semester 2

## **Assessment method**

Final group discussion

## **Office hours**

By appointment, writing to [michele.riva@unimib.it](mailto:michele.riva@unimib.it)

## **Sustainable Development Goals**

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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