This biography of Galen takes an often misunderstood figure and makes him a real human being. That sounds silly to say, but it is actually not true. I have read enough times I have read where early modern medicine had to "overcome" Galen. There is a sense of course in which that is true. Galen's theories and practices were often criticized and challenged by later medical thinkers and practitioners. This was especially true in the early modern period, when medical knowledge and practice were rapidly changing and evolving.

Galen was a Greek physician and philosopher who lived in the 2nd century AD. He is considered one of the most important figures in the history of medicine and is credited with the development of many medical concepts and theories. Galen's writings and teachings were studied and followed for many centuries, including the early modern period.

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In the early modern period, Galen's theories were often criticized and challenged, but they still had an influence on the development of medicine. This was especially true in the field of anatomy and physiology, where Galen's teachings were still used and studied.

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Humorism - Wikipedia

The non-naturals and humours are key to understanding medieval and early modern attitudes to diet and health so here's a quick guide to what they were and how they worked.

The six non-naturals were categories in Ancient Greek medicine which you had to keep in balance in order to be healthy. The non-naturals were:

1. Phlegm (cold, moist)
2. Blood (hot, moist)
3. Yellow bile (hot, dry)
4. Black bile (cold, dry)

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The Four Humors: Eating in the Renaissance

Galen identified four temperaments in which one of the qualities, warm, cold, moist or dry, predominated and four more in which a combination of two, warm and moist, warm and dry, cold and dry or cold and moist, dominated.

Galen believed in the Aristotelian doctrine that, in Nature, form follows function. If we want to understand the function of any system, we must first understand its form. That's why Galen considered anatomy to be so important. Galen was fanatical in his pursuit of anatomical knowledge.

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Galen In Early Modern English Medicine: Case-studies in History, Pharmacology and Surgery 1618-1794. This thesis examines the influence of Galen on early modern medicine in the context of wider developments in the early modern period. It considers how Galen's ideas and works were transmitted and received in Europe, with particular attention to England and the Netherlands.

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