
THE OATH

- BY HIPPOCRATES (Written 400 B.C., Translated by Francis Adams)

I SWEAR by Apollo the physician, and Aesculapius, & Health, and All-Heal, and all the gods & goddesses, that, according to my ability & judgment, I will keep this Oath & this stipulation – to reckon him who taught me this Art equally dear to me as my parents, to share my substances with him, and relieve his necessities if required; to look upon his offspring in the same footing as my own brothers, & to teach them this art, if they shall wish to learn it, without fee or stipulation; & that by precept, lecture, & every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons, & those of my teachers, & to disciples bound by a stipulation & oath according to the law of medicine, but to none others.

I will follow the system of regimen which, according to my ability & judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients & abstain from whatever is deleterious & mischievous. I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; & in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion. With purity and holiness, I will pass my life & practice my Art.

I will not cut persons laboring under the stone, but will leave it to be done by men who are practitioners of the work. Into whatever houses I enter, I will go into them for the benefit of the sick, & will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief & corruption; & further from the seduction of females or males, of freemen & slaves. Whatever, in connection with my professional practice or not, in connection with it, I see or hear, in the life of men, which ought not to be spoken of abroad. I will not divulge, as reckoning that all such should be kept secret.

While I continue to keep the Oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life & the practice of the art, respected by all men, in all times! But should I trespass & violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot!