

# 'English Sweat' - A strange disease that mysteriously causes the deaths of thousands of people and has never been solved

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The 'English sweat' broke out in five main waves, in 1485, 1508, 1517, 1528 and 1551 and was limited to England. Europe has recorded only a handful of cases.

The 'English sweat' has a high mortality rate, around 30% to 50%. The onset of the 'English sweat' occurs very quickly, many patients have their first symptoms the night before and by the next morning have died. According to experts, if the patient survives for 24 hours, he will survive. Experts say patients will usually survive if they survive for 24 hours.



## The strange disease scared the whole UK

Many suspect that French soldiers hired by King Henry VIII's father during the War of the Roses in 1487 brought the epidemic that caused mass deaths in the English King's reign.

According to the notes of Thomas More - King Henry VIII's advisor, 'King Henry's court officials constantly had to move to avoid infection. The king had to bring both the royal family and his trusted people far away, and there was even a time when the king had to order the court to disband.

Also according to Thomas More, people felt safer on the battlefield than in the city when the disease broke out.

After winning on the battlefield, Henry's army returned to London, and the epidemic broke out. And in just 6 weeks, it took the lives of 15,000 people.

The death of Prince Arthur Tudor, son of Henry VIII and heir to the throne, in 1502 was also attributed to the English sweat.

In November 1485, the disease subsided but flared up again in 1508 and was limited to England. It has claimed the lives of many people. By October 1508, the disease continued to disappear.

By the end of June 1517, a third epidemic broke out and was mainly limited to London. Information about this outbreak is not much recorded in historical and medical documents.

In 1528, the epidemic once again returned to London. But this time the disease spread strongly and spread to Europe, all the way to the East of Russia.

The last outbreak occurred in 1551 and was limited to England. This time the disease killed about 1,000 people, bringing terror to the whole of England.

Elma Brenner, a historian at the Wellcome Library in London, said that at that time, all social classes, from the poor to the royal family, were susceptible to the disease.

## **Symptoms and death are inevitable**

Medieval doctors failed to identify the pathogen that caused the 'English sweat'. They could not determine where it came from or the cause of the disease, so they could not control the epidemic.

Many theories about how the disease spread have been proposed. Many people believe that this disease is not transmitted from person to person because it is not spread through blood or body fluids. It was suggested that the disease was caused by 'foreign impurities'.

The special thing is that the English sweating sickness spread mainly among teenagers, middle-aged people, especially wealthy men, in the upper class, and did not attack the elderly or young children like most other epidemics. the Middle Ages.

The English sweating sickness begins quickly and without warning signs. Symptoms usually appear at night, first with chills and shaking lasting from half an hour to three hours, then sweating, then high fever, rash, headache, delirium, rapid pulse, thirst intense and physically debilitating.

The course of the disease is very severe, with some cases dying within a few hours.



The mortality rate is about 30-50%, some documents state that the risk of death is up to 80-90%. This difference was the level of expertise of the doctors of that period.

According to Dr. Thomas Le Forestier, the English sweating sickness has an incubation period of one to 29 days, sometimes up to 44 days.

By 1551, the sweating sickness in England suddenly disappeared. By 1718, a similar disease broke out in France called the Picardy sweat. There were then several sporadic outbreaks that lasted until 1861.

## Decode the mystery

To decipher the disease, scientists exhumed King Arthur's body in Worcester Cathedral in 2002 but found no clues.

Some people speculate that the disease was spread by a forest virus that spread to humans through rats.

Some scientists believe that the symptoms of the English sweat are similar to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, but the two diseases are not the same. Many people believe that the English sweat is anthrax or tuberculosis.

In 2014, researchers at Queen Astrid Military Hospital, Brussels, Belgium argued that the 'English Sweat' is an infectious disease caused by Hantavirus, the vector of which is bats, rodents, especially is a mouse. Humans can be infected with this virus through feces, saliva or contact with intermediate species that cause the disease. Hantavirus is a gram-negative RNA virus belonging to the Bunyaviridae family.

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