

Hippocratic Oath

(Ascribed to Hippocrates; 460-377 B.C.)

The Covenant

I swear by Apollo Physician, by Asclepius, by Hygeia, by Panacea, and by all the gods and goddesses, making them witnesses, that I will carry out, according to my ability and judgment, this oath and this indenture:

Duties to Teacher

To regard my teacher in this art as equal to my parents; to make him partner in my livelihood, and when he is in need of money to share mine with him; to consider his offspring equal to my brothers; to teach them this art, if they require to learn it, without fee or indenture; and to impart precept, oral instruction, and all the other learning, to my sons, to the sons of my teacher, and to pupils who have signed the indenture and sworn obedience to the physician's Law, but to none other.

Duties to Patients

I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but I will never use it to injure or wrong them.

I will not give poison to anyone though asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a plan. Similarly I will not give a pessary to a woman to cause abortion. But in purity and in holiness I will guard my life and my art.

I will not use the knife either on sufferers from stone, but will give place to such as are craftsmen therein.

Into whatsoever house I enter, I will do so to help the sick, keeping myself free from all intentional wrong-doing and harm, especially from fornication with woman or man, bond or free.

Whatsoever in the course of practice I see or hear (or even outside my practice in social intercourse) that ought never to be published abroad, I will not divulge, but consider such things to be holy secrets.

The Sanction

Now if I keep this oath and break it not, may I enjoy honor, in my life and art, among men for all time; but if I transgress and forswear myself, may the opposite befall me.