

Rufus of Ephesus Encyclopedia Article

Rufus of Ephesus

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Contents

[Rufus of Ephesus Encyclopedia Article.....1](#)

[Contents.....2](#)

[Rufus of Ephesus.....3](#)

Rufus of Ephesus

fl. late first century B.C.-mid-first century A.D.

Greek physician whose writings on anatomy included the pulse and its relationship to the heartbeat. Rufus was skilled in physiology, clinical observation, surgery, and the treatment of disease. He described bubonic plague and gout; he studied the anatomy of the eye, the brain, and the placenta. He was first to describe the liver, although his description was based on a pig's liver. Rufus introduced medicines such as hiera, a strong cathartic containing bitter apple, and others. His surgical procedures to stop bleeding were advanced for his time. His treatise *On the Interrogation of the Patient* was important because it explained how medical and family histories contribute to an accurate diagnosis of a patient.