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Şifahane, Edirne. Medical treatment.

Ottoman medical care was generally provided for free to those who needed it (and who could get to hospitals). In general, patients with fortune and a supportive family would be treated at home – as would children. Those with less resources would be treated in hospitals: separate ones for men and women. (There were even female doctors for women.) Yet note the complexity below:

“In sum, a simplistic explanation of who was entitled to free medical services based solely on the social and economic standing of poor hospital patients versus rich people treated at home does not reflect the realities of the early modern Middle East. Neediness was decided upon the establishment of poverty, which was described as the lack of something crucial. That could include the lack of material objects, but when it came to entitlement to free medical services it seems the second category was at least as important: the lack of social objects, like skills or family that allow one to rise from one’s position.... The specific mission of Ottoman hospitals was to help the sick, the injured, and those suffering from mutilations and pain. [Hospitals and similar institutions] intended to serve people who for a number of reasons could not take care of themselves. They might have lacked financial means, health, and strength (physical and mental), or supportive family (through accident or physical or emotional distance). But it was not necessarily because of a continuous poor situation, that a person availed himself or herself of charitable medical services. Under certain circumstances even a member of a famous and well-off family could use free medical services.”

Shefer-Mossensohn, Miri. *Ottoman Medicine : Healing and Medical Institutions, 1500-1700*, State University of New York Press, 2009. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uaz/detail.action?docID=3408131>.