



## What impact did soap have on the Crimean war?



[www.medicalmuseum.org.uk/resources](http://www.medicalmuseum.org.uk/resources)

### WHAT IS THIS?

This is a bar of carbolic soap, it is an antiseptic soap made from carbolic acid. Soap like this played a pivotal role in the health of soldiers in the Crimean War.

There were many failings of the British Army during the Crimean War, medical care for injured soldiers was one of them. Florence Nightingale became aware of the terrible conditions that injured soldiers were living in and went, with many other female nurses, to look after the soldiers. The nurses insisted on routine handwashing and cleaning of the hospital, 30 tons of soap was sent to them to help them enforce this. These and other improvements in hygiene cut the death rate from 42% to 2%.

### HOW CAN I USE THIS IN THE CLASSROOM?

Use this picture to introduce the Crimean war topic.

The picture and question could be used to assess understanding of the impact of medicine on war by challenging your students to write an essay style answer.