

## Ancient Medicines

- Look carefully at the object pictured here.
- In the space at the bottom of this page, make a sketch of the object. (Don't worry — you don't need to show it to anyone. Sketching helps you see details you might otherwise miss.)
- Answer questions 1–4 on page 2 about how this object was used in the ancient Mediterranean.
- When you have answered all the questions, read the museum label below (no peeking!) and answer question 5.



## Questions

1. What material do you think the object is made of? Do you think it's rare or common? How do you think it was made? Why is this important to know?
2. Does this object look like a medical tool to you? Why or why not?
3. How do you think you might use this object to treat a patient?
4. How does this object compare with other medical tools you have seen, such as in a doctor's office or at a healing ceremony?

## Museum Label

Title: Medical instruments

Material: Bronze tools on an iron ring

Date: Roman period

Findspot: Acquired by the Kelsey Museum from the Dennison Collection in 1909.

Object number: KM 1485a–g

In the ancient Mediterranean, it was believed that illness was caused by a curse or evil spirit. Afflicted people sought spiritual help from the gods to overcome illness, but many also sought help from healers such as midwives, physicians, and barbers. These practitioners treated the physical symptoms of illness and helped heal injuries such as broken bones and lacerations.

This object consists of six instruments secured to an iron ring. Five of the instruments have a cylindrical body and a V-shaped prong at the end. We refer to these tools by the general term "probe." The sixth tool is a pair of tweezers, a folded strip of flat bronze secured with a sliding loop. These would have been used by medical healers to clean wounds, examine ailments, and treat patients.

5. How do your ideas about this object compare with what you read in the museum label?