Hugh of Lucca Encyclopedia Article

Hugh of Lucca

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Hugh of Lucca

c.1160-c. 1257

Italian surgeon who helped to maintain the classical tradition of medicine and surgery during a period in which surgery reached its low point. Hugh of Lucca is primarily remembered for promoting the use of the soporific sponge as a surgical anesthetic and for his belief that wounds should be allowed to heal cleanly, without suppuration. Hugh's ideas and methods were preserved in the writings of his student, Theodoric, Bishop of Cervia (1210-1298).