Pedro Barba Encyclopedia Article

Pedro Barba

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Contents

Pedro Barba Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Pedro Barba.....3

Pedro Barba

1608-1671

Spanish physician who first wrote about the use of the bark of the cinchona tree to treat malaria. Until the early seventeenth century malaria was treated like other fevers by bleeding and purging. In 1632 Jesuit missionaries brought the bark of the cinchona tree back to Spain from Peru, where they had observed its effective use by the natives. Barba recognized the value of the tree, which produced quinine, an effective treatment against malaria.