

De Arte Gymnastica



De Arte Gymnastica written by Girolamo Mercuriali (1530-1606) is one of the earliest books to discuss the therapeutic value of gymnastics and sports generally for the cure of disability and an important study of gymnastics in the ancient world. - From *Morton's Medical Bibliography*, 5th edition

Giovanni Mercuriali, an Italian physician, was educated at Padua and spent a number of years in Rome studying classical and medical literature. His extensive knowledge of the attitudes of Greeks and Romans toward diet, exercise, and hygiene and their effect on health and disease is evident in this work. First published in 1569, *De Arte Gymnastica* is considered the first book in the field of sports medicine. The 1587 second edition (images are shown here) is the first illustrated book on gymnastics. It contains 20 woodcuts by Coriolan which are based on the drawings by Pirro Ligorio. The Flax Collection includes the 1573, 1587, and 1601 editions.

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