Aulus Celsus was a Roman encyclopedist working in the first century, who wrote on a plethora of topics. Little is known of the life of Celsus and only portions of his writing survive.

In *De Re Medica*, Celsus included descriptions of surgery, including skin grafts, and he defined the four fundamental signs of inflammation: heat, pain, redness, and swelling. He also described the staunching of arterial bleeding by means of a ligature.

Celsus’s description and explanation of human anatomy, surgery, and treatment of disease is of great historical importance as it is the foundation of most of what is known about Hellenistic medicine. Modern knowledge of anatomy and surgery as practiced during the golden age of Alexandria comes almost entirely from *De Re Medica*.

Very few books dealing with medicine or anatomy from the classical or medieval periods included illustrations or diagrams. The 1772 reprint edition of *De Re Medica* on display here is no exception. The pages show the format of anatomy instruction in that they are structured as lectures with a preface, argument, and outline of points to discuss—all without diagrams.