Description of the Medieval Black Death

Those infected felt themselves penetrated by a pain throughout their whole bodies and, so to say, undermined. Then there developed on the thighs or upper arms a boil about the size of a lentil which the people called "burn boil". This infected the whole body, and penetrated it so that the patient violently vomited blood.

Then there developed gland boils on the groin, the thighs, the arms, or on the neck. At first these were of the size of a hazel nut, and developed accompanied by violent shivering fits, which soon rendered those attacked so weak that they could not stand up, but were forced to lie in their beds consumed by violent fever. Soon the boils grew to the size of a walnut, then to that of a hen's egg or a goose's egg, and they were exceedingly painful, and irritated the body, causing the sufferer to vomit blood. The sickness lasted three days, and on the fourth, at the latest, the patient succumbed.

Michael Platiensis (1357)
Description of Modern Bubonic Plague

Bubonic plague symptoms appear suddenly, usually 2–5 days after exposure to the bacteria. Symptoms include:

- Chills
- General ill feeling
- High fever
- Muscle Cramps
- Seizures
- Smooth, painful lymph gland swelling called a bubo, commonly found in the groin, but may occur in the armpits or neck, most often at the site of the initial infection (bite or scratch)
- Pain may occur in the area before the swelling appears
- Skin color changes to a pink hue in some extreme cases
- Bleeding out of the ear will begin after 12 hours of infection

Other symptoms may include heavy breathing, continuous blood vomiting, aching limbs, coughing, and extreme pain. The pain is usually caused by the decaying or decomposing of the skin while the person is still alive. Additional symptoms include extreme fatigue, lenticulae (black dots scattered throughout the body), delirium and coma.
Illness is characterized by the rapid onset of fever, malaise, muscle pain, headache, and the inflammation of the pharynx. Six days following vomiting and bloody diarrhea, individuals may develop maculopapular rash with bleeding at needle sites and bodily orifices.

A maculopapular rash is a type of rash characterized by a flat, red area on the skin that is covered with small confluent bumps. The term "maculopapular" is a compound: macules are small, flat discolored spots on the surface of the skin; and papules are small, raised bumps. It is also described as erythematous, or red.