

The HRHS Black History + Health Series Highlights:

ONESIMUS

Please see our list of resources that we have collected for your viewing that share the history, impact, and legacy of ONESIMUS, the enslaved African who shared the revolutionary African method of inoculation against smallpox and helped save future generations from smallpox.

Readings:

- **How an Enslaved African Man in Boston Helped Save Generations from Smallpox**
<https://www.history.com/news/smallpox-vaccine-onesimus-slave-cotton-mather>
- **The African slave who taught America how to vaccinate itself from smallpox**
<https://qz.com/africa/1854780/an-african-slave-taught-america-to-vaccinate-from-smallpox/>

Videos:

- **Black Gems Unearthed: Onesimus and the Smallpox Epidemic**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuCxjlioAu0>
This video shares how a Black man named Onesimus' insight led to a treatment for the Smallpox disease.
- **Smallpox Inoculation and Onesimus**
<https://youtu.be/HlerjWCYOYc>
Inoculation existed for centuries before it was accepted by Western medicine. Onesimus, an African slave in early eighteenth century Boston, played a critical role in legitimizing a procedure that saved millions of lives. The History Guy remembers Onesimus, who has been called one of "the Best Bostonians of All Time."