

Difference Between Germ Theory and Terrain Theory

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Key Difference - Germ Theory vs Terrain Theory

Many diseases are caused by infectious agents or germs. These infectious agents are referred to as microorganisms. The germ theory of disease states that diseases are caused by microorganisms. This theory was introduced and proven by many scientists. Among them, the great scientist Louis Pasteur scientifically proved that the germ theory of diseases is correct. However, there is another theory called terrain theory which states a different idea about the diseases and the causes. Terrain theory states that diseases are results of our internal environment and its ability to maintain [homeostasis](#) against outside threats. These two theories are considered to be equally important for our health. Therefore, it is important to know the difference between these two theories. The key difference between germ theory and terrain theory is that **germ theory states that germs are the causative agents of most diseases** while **terrain theory states that our internal environment and its elements are responsible for the diseases**.

What is Germ Theory?

The germ theory of disease is a theory put forward to explain the reasons behind the [infections](#) or the diseases. It states that many diseases are caused by infectious agents or germs. Infectious agents or germs are two words used to refer to microorganisms which cannot be seen by our naked eye. They are visible only under microscopes. Germ theory considers all types of microorganisms including [bacteria](#), [viruses](#), [fungi](#), protozoans as germs and they are responsible for diseases in humans, animals, and other living organisms. As a result of growth and reproduction of these microorganisms inside a host organism, diseases are caused.

When microorganisms cause infections, we called them [pathogens](#). According to the germ theory, a pathogen is the principal cause of the disease while other factors such as environmental and hereditary factors also influence the severity of the disease.

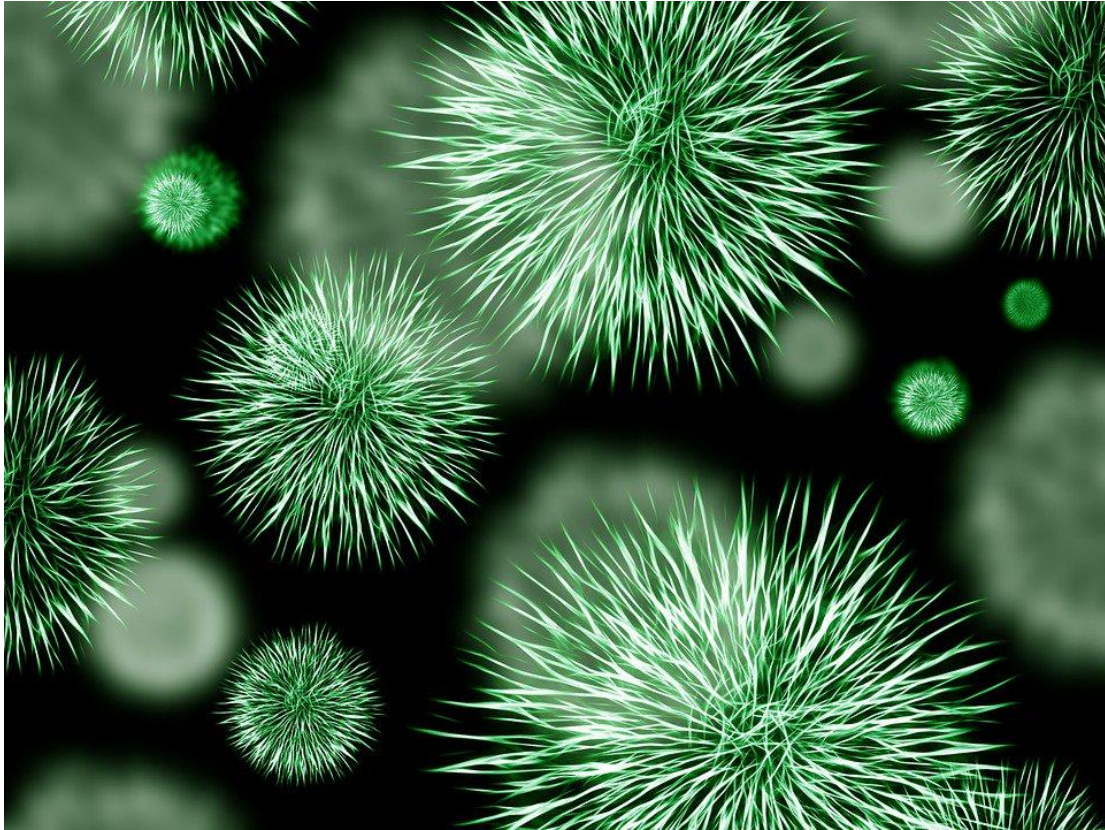


Figure 01: Germs which cause diseases

Germ theory was introduced by several scientists. It was aided by the invention of the microscope by Anton van Leeuwenhoek. This theory was supported by scientific experiments and proof given by two scientists Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch. They claimed that specific types of microorganisms which come from external sources invade the host organisms' body and cause infectious diseases. Due to this concept, research work was initiated for the identification of disease-causing germs and potential life-saving treatments. This theory is largely adopted in the health sector, especially for the identification and destroying foreign agents which are directly responsible for diseases.

What is Terrain Theory?

Terrain theory is a theory which comments on diseases and causes. Terrain theory states that our state of health is determined by the internal environment of our body. The word 'terrain' is used to refer to the internal environment of our body. Terrain theory was initiated by Claude Bernard and was later developed by Antoine Bechamp.

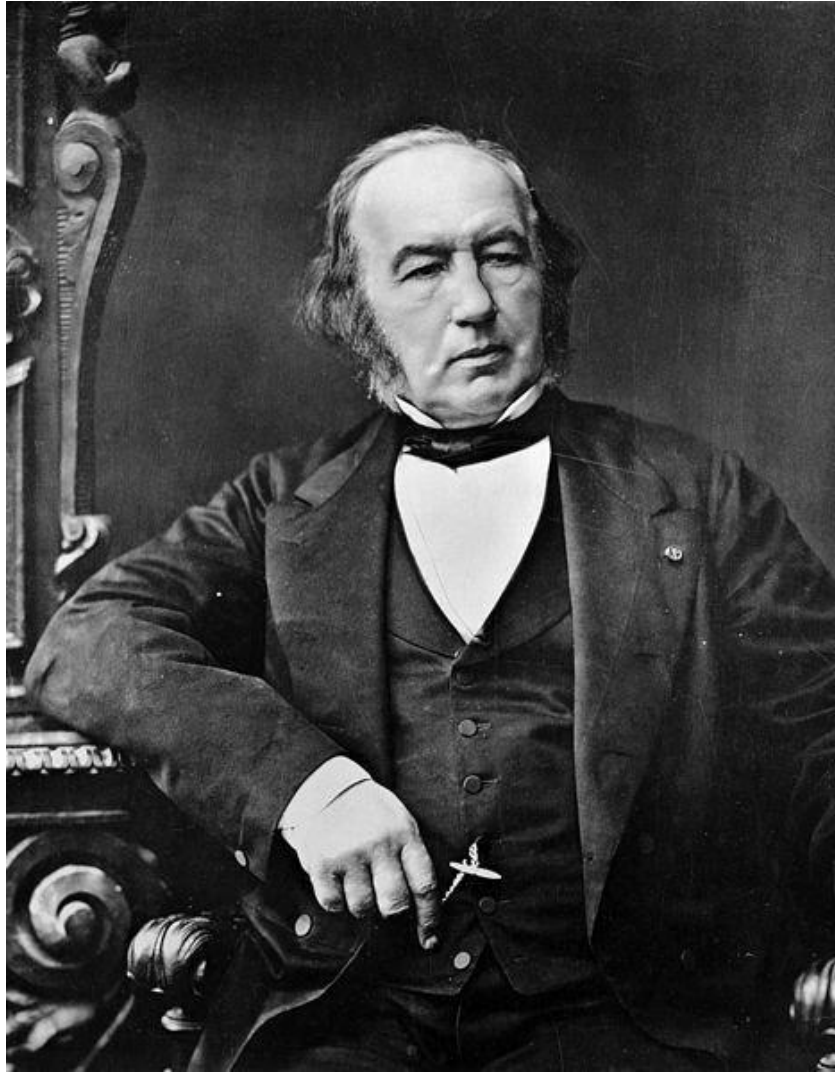


Figure 02: Claude Bernard

According to the terrain theory, the diseases are not caused due to germs. Organisms are subjected to diseases due to the quality of the terrain and the elements it faces. Susceptibility to a disease totally depends on the quality of the individuals' internal environment rather than germs. When the body functions at homeostasis and when immunity and detoxification work properly, the terrain of the individual remain healthy. When there is a healthy terrain, it can handle the foreign pathogenic microorganisms and they can be chased from the body. A weak terrain is more vulnerable to external invaders. The weak terrain is a result of imbalanced metabolic processes and it should be converted to healthy terrain through nutrition, mindset, detoxification, maintaining proper pH, etc. Therefore terrain theory encourages you to maintain a healthy terrain to fight against the diseases.

What is the difference between Germ Theory and Terrain Theory?

Germ Theory vs Terrain Theory	
Germ Theory states that many diseases are caused by the presence and actions of specific microorganisms within the body.	Terrain Theory states that the internal environment which is known as 'terrain' is responsible for our state of health.
Discovery	
Germ theory was proven by Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch.	The terrain theory was initiated by Claude Bernard and later developed by Antoine Bechamp.
Cause of the Disease	
According to the germ theory, diseases are caused by the microorganisms.	According to the terrain theory, diseases are caused due to the quality (weak or healthy) of the terrain and the other elements in the body.

Summary - Germ Theory vs Terrain Theory

Germ theory and terrain theory are two concepts introduced regarding the diseases and their causative agents. Germ theory says that diseases are caused due to microorganisms. Different types of microorganisms invade the body and causes infections. However a different concept to this theory was built later by scientists. It is known as terrain theory. According to the terrain theory, our internal environment is responsible for the occurrence of diseases. The quality of the internal environment or the terrain mainly determines the susceptibility for a disease. Terrain theory believes if an individual maintains a healthy terrain, it can handle outside invaders or threats which cause diseases. When terrain is weak, it favors the microorganisms. Hence, the health depends on the quality of an individuals' terrain. This is the difference between germ theory and terrain theory.

References:

- 1."Germ theory." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 27 Feb. 2017. Web. 27 June 2017.
- 2."Germ vs Terrain Theory - Which Do We Adopt To Be Healthy?" NaturalNews Blogs. N.p., 12 Nov. 2015. Web. [Available here](#). 27 June 2017.

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- 1."426997" (Public Domain) via [Pixabay](#)
2. "[Portrait of Claude Bernard \(1813-1878\), French physiologist Wellcome M0010569](#)" By [\(CC BY 4.0\)](#) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)

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