

Germs

By Cindy Grigg

¹ *Caption: Mumps is one childhood illness that can be prevented by a vaccine.*

² Think about a time when you felt sick. Most people get sick from time to time. In many cases, you can help keep yourself well by following good health habits.

³ Do you wash your hands before you eat? Do you know why you should? You should wash because your hands are probably covered with germs!



⁴ Centuries ago, people believed that evil spirits caused sickness. Today scientists know that many illnesses are caused by germs called bacteria and viruses.

⁵ Bacteria and viruses are too small for you to see. They are found everywhere. They are in the air and water. They are in food and on other objects. They are on your desk, your pencil, and your books. You have them inside you and on your skin all the time.

⁶ Bacteria are tiny. They can only be seen through a microscope. Some bacteria are helpful. Some help us digest food. Some bacteria are harmful. If you have ever had strep throat or pneumonia, you have had a disease caused by bacteria.

⁷ Bacterial cells grow very rapidly. One cell splits into two. Those two cells split into four, and so on. In just one day, 16 million cells may grow! Doctors use medicines called antibiotics to kill bacterial infections.

⁸ Viruses are thousands of times smaller than bacteria. Virus cells can't multiply by themselves the way bacteria do. Instead, they take over other living cells. They cause them to multiply rapidly.

⁹ Germs can get into your body through a cut on your skin. You might breathe germs from the air. You might take in germs on food. You might touch an object that has germs. If you then rub your eyes, nose, or mouth, the germs can get inside your body.

¹⁰ Germs can live in your body because it is the right temperature for them to grow. They can multiply quickly inside your body. Then you feel sick. You get different diseases from different kinds of disease germs. Colds, flu, mumps, measles, and chicken pox are all caused by viruses.

¹¹ Bacteria can cause strep throat and pneumonia. Medicines called antibiotics can kill many kinds of bacteria that cause diseases. Taking antibiotics for a disease caused by certain bacteria can help a sick person get well. But antibiotics cannot help a sick person if their sickness is caused by a virus.

¹² You can help keep yourself well by keeping your skin clean. Washing with soap and water can get rid of many germs on your skin. Eating healthy food and getting enough exercise and sleep can help keep your body strong enough to fight off many germs. Always cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough. This helps to stop germs from spreading from you to another person. Don't share a glass with anyone.

¹³ Vaccines are used to protect you from some diseases. A vaccine is made from the dead or weakened germs that cause a disease. It is usually given to children by an injection (a shot). Sometimes it is given as a liquid you swallow. Today there are vaccines for many childhood illnesses. These illnesses killed many children before the vaccines were invented.

¹⁴ Today we are lucky. We know many ways to stay healthy. Now you know about germs. When lunch is ready - wash your hands!

Name _____

Science Pd: _____

Germs

<p>1. What causes many illnesses?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Evil spirits</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Bacteria and viruses</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Germs</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Both B and C</p> <p><input type="radio"/> E A, B, and C</p>	<p>2. You can see bacteria and viruses everywhere.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>3. Bacteria are smaller than viruses.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>4. All bacteria are "bad" because they make us sick.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>5. We need some kinds of bacteria in our bodies.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>6. Doctors treat bacterial infections with drugs called:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Vaccines</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Injections</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Antibiotics</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D All of the above</p>
<p>7. Name some illnesses you can get from viruses.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>8. If you are sick with a virus, the doctor won't give you an antibiotic.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>9. Which of these is not a way to stay healthy?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Sharing food and drinks with someone else</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Eating healthy food, getting enough exercise and sleep</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Getting vaccines</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Washing hands often</p>	<p>10. What are vaccines made of?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Antibiotics</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Healthy foods</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Dead or weakened germs that cause the disease</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D "good" germs</p>