



Teens - Intermediate

Our bodies are **pretty** amazing. Day after day, they work hard — digesting food, **pumping** blood and oxygen, sending **signals** from our brains and our nerves, and much more. But there is a group of **tiny** invaders that can make our bodies sick — they're called germs.

Some kids may think that germs are **bugs or cooties** or other **gross stuff**. Actually, germs are tiny organisms, or living things, that can cause **disease**. Germs are so small and **sneaky** that they **creep** into our bodies without being noticed. In fact, germs are so tiny that you need to use a microscope to see them. When they get in our bodies, we don't know what **hit** us until we have symptoms that say we've been attacked!

Activity 1 Vocabulary: Match the meaning of the words as used in the paragraphs.

A

Pretty

Pump

Signals

Tiny

Bugs

Gross stuff

Disease

Sneaky

Creep

Hit

B

minute

blood sucking insect

very

illness

message, order

force a liquid up

move slowly and secretly

unpleasant material

struck

furtive

What Types of Germs Are There?

Germs are found all over the world, in all kinds of places. There are four major types of germs: bacteria, viruses, fungi, and protozoa. They can invade plants, animals, and people, and sometimes they make us sick.

Bacteria (say: **back**-teer-ee-uh) are tiny, one-cell creatures that get nutrients from their environments in order to live. In some cases that environment is a human body. Bacteria can reproduce outside of the body or within the body as they cause infections. Some infections bacteria cause include sore throats (tonsillitis or strep throat), ear infections, cavities, and pneumonia (say: new-**mo**-nyuh).

But not all bacteria are bad. Some bacteria are good for our bodies — they help keep things in balance. Good bacteria live in our intestines and help us use the nutrients in the food we eat and make waste from what's left over. We couldn't make the most of a healthy meal without these important helper germs! Some bacteria are also used by scientists in labs to produce medicines and vaccines (say: **vak**-seens).

Viruses (say: **vy**-rus-iz) need to be inside living cells to grow and reproduce. Most viruses can't survive very long if they're not inside a living thing like a plant, animal, or person. Whatever a virus lives in is called its host. When viruses get inside people's bodies, they can spread and make people sick. Viruses cause chickenpox, measles, flu, and many other diseases. Because some viruses can live for a while on something like a doorknob or countertop, be sure to wash your hands regularly!

Fungi (say: **fun**-guy) are multi-cell (made of many cells), plant-like organisms. Unlike other plants, fungi cannot make their own food from soil, water, and air. Instead, fungi get their nutrition from plants, people, and animals. They love to live in damp, warm places, and most fungi are not dangerous. An example of something caused by fungi is athlete's foot, that itchy rash that teens and adults sometimes get between their toes.

Protozoa (say: pro-toh-**zoh**-uh) are one-cell organisms that love moisture and often spread diseases through water. Some protozoa cause intestinal infections that lead to diarrhea (runny poop), nausea, and belly pain.

Activity 2: Answer

- 1.- What types of germs exist?
- 2.- How do they make us ill?
- 3.- What do bacteria need to live? Why do they attack people?
- 4.- What illnesses do they produce?
- 5.- Where are good bacteria in our bodies? How do they help us?

6.- What happens to viruses if they are not inside a living thing?

7.- What is the name of this living thing?

8.- Why should we wash our hands regularly?

9.- What problem can fungi cause?

10.- How do protozoa spread diseases? What illness can they cause?

What Do Germs Do?

Once germs invade our bodies, they snuggle in for a long stay. They gobble up nutrients and energy, and can produce toxins (say: **tok-sinz**), which are like poisons. Those toxins can cause symptoms of common infections, like fevers, sniffles, rashes, coughing, vomiting, and diarrhea.

How do doctors figure out what germs are doing? They take a closer look. By looking at samples of blood and other fluids under a microscope or sending these samples to a laboratory for more tests, doctors can tell which germs are living in your body and how they are making you sick.

How Can You Protect Yourself From Germs?

Most germs are spread through the air in sneezes, coughs, or even breaths. Germs can also spread in sweat, saliva, and blood. Some pass from person to person by touching something that is contaminated, like shaking hands with someone who has a cold and then touching your own nose. One of the best ways to protect yourself from germs is to steer clear of the things that can spread them:



to person by with

So the best things that

Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze and cover your mouth when you cough to keep from spreading germs.

mouth when

Remember the two words germs fear — soap and water. Washing your hands well and often is the best way to beat these tiny warriors. Wash your hands every time you cough or sneeze, before you eat or prepare foods, after you use the bathroom, after you touch animals and pets, after you play outside, and after you visit a sick relative or friend.

Using tissues for your sneezes and sniffles is another great weapon against germs. But don't just throw tissues on the floor to pick up later. Toss them in the trash and, again, wash your hands!

Now that you know the facts about germs, you may still pick up a cough or a cold once in a while, but you'll be ready to keep most of those invading germs from moving in.

Activity 3: True or False

- 1.- Toxins produced by germs can be beneficial to the body
 - 2.- Blood test help doctors determine the illness
 - 3.- Germs pass from person to person by touching something that is contaminated
 - 4.- You should cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze and cover your mouth
when you cough to keep from spreading germs.
 - 5.- Washing your hands is not good at all
 - 6.- You may keep a tissue that you have used to blow your nose
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Only for teachers **Answers**

Activity 1:

pretty= very, pump= force a liquid up, signal=message, order,
tiny=minute, bug= blood sucking insect, gross stuff= unpleasant material, disease=illness,
sneaky=furtive, creep=move secretly, hit= struck

Activity 2:

1.- bacteria, viruses, fungi, and protozoa 2.- . They can invade plants, animals, and people, and sometimes they make us sick. 3.- Bacteria are tiny, one-cell creatures that get nutrients from their environments in order to live. In some cases that environment is a human body. Bacteria can reproduce outside of the body or within the body as they cause infections 4.- bacteria cause include sore throats (tonsillitis or strep throat), ear infections, cavities, and pneumonia. 5.- Some bacteria are good for our bodies — they help keep things in balance. Good bacteria live in our intestines and help us use the nutrients in the food we eat and make waste from what's left over 6.- Viruses need to be inside living cells to grow and reproduce. Most viruses can't survive very long if they're not inside a living thing like a plant, animal, or person 7.- Whatever a virus lives in is called its host 8.- Because some viruses can live for a while on something like a doorknob or countertop 9.- fungi cannot make their own food from soil, water, and air. Instead, fungi get their nutrition from plants, people, and animals. An example of something caused by fungi is athlete's foot, that itchy rash that teens and adults sometimes get between their toes. 10.- Protozoa (say: pro-toh-**zoh**-uh) are one-cell organisms that love moisture and often spread diseases through water. Some protozoa cause intestinal infections that lead to diarrhea

Activity 3: F , T , T , T , F , F