

Gimme Some Skin



5 minutes+

What You Will Do

Examine how skin protects you from infectious diseases.

Get it Together

- ◆ 4 resealable plastic bags
- ◆ 4 fresh apples
- ◆ Rotting apple (leave sitting on kitchen counter for a week or so)
- ◆ Cotton swab or cotton ball
- ◆ Pen
- ◆ Paper towels
- ◆ Toothpick
- ◆ Rubbing alcohol
- ◆ Water
- ◆ Warm, dark place

Procedure

1. Label the four plastic bags 1, 2, 3, and 4.
2. Gently wash the four fresh apples and dry them.
3. Place one apple in Bag 1 and seal it.
4. Insert the toothpick into the rotting apple, remove it, and lightly draw the toothpick down the side of the second apple without breaking the skin.
5. Repeat Step 4 three more times, touching the toothpick to different parts of the second apple. Insert the apple in Bag 2 and seal it.
6. Repeat Steps 4 and 5, but pierce the skin of the third apple. Place in Bag 3 and seal it.
7. Repeat Step 6, but before you place the apple in the bag, dip the cotton swab in rubbing alcohol and swab the scratches. Seal this in Bag 4.
8. Store the four bags in a warm, dry place and observe every day for one week.

A Closer Look

The apple in Bag 3, which has broken skin, appears moldy. However, the apple in Bag 4, which was rubbed with alcohol, is clean because alcohol is a good disinfectant and keeps germs out. The apple in Bag 2 might have a small amount of decay, and the apple in Bag 1 has no decay. Your skin, like the skin of an apple, acts as a barrier against bacteria and infection. Washing your hands prevents the spread of germs.

