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Viruses



What is a virus?

A **virus** is a very small **infectious agent** that gets inside living things and makes them sick.

How do viruses make you sick?

A virus makes you sick by first finding a way into one of your **cells**. Viruses can enter your body through any opening but usually do so through your eyes, nose, ears and mouth. Once it is inside your body, it enters your cells and uses the stuff inside the cell to make copies of itself. After a while, the

Interesting Fact!

Viruses are so small that they cannot be seen with a normal microscope.

Ecobottle Sample

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How can you protect yourself?

There are a couple things you can do to protect yourself from viruses. You can:

- ✓ Wash your hands with soap and water
- Get your vaccinations
- Stay away from people who are sick
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes or mouth if you have not washed your hands
- Eat healthy and exercise



How do doctors treat viruses?

Doctors can treat viruses but it can be very difficult because the viruses are hidden inside your cells. The medications they use are called **antivirals**. However, most of the time the body's **immune system** fights off and kills the virus by itself. Viruses like the common cold and the flu are not normally treated with antivirals.

What is a vaccine?

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Virus Examples:

- Flu – The best way to avoid the flu is to get vaccinated each year. If you are sick with the flu, you may have an upset stomach, chills, a sore throat, fever, cough, and a runny or stuffy nose.
- Common cold – The best way to prevent yourself from “catching” the common cold

Interesting Fact!

There are over 200 different viruses that cause the common cold!

is to wash your hands and stay away from people that are sick. If you are sick with a cold, you may have a sore throat, runny nose, and a cough.

Virus – A very small infectious agent that can make you sick.

Infectious Agent – A small thing that causes infection (examples include viruses and bacteria).

Cell – Is a small building block that makes up all living organisms.

Antivirals – Medication that a doctor may give you if you have a virus.

Immune system – A system in your body that fights off viruses and infections.

Vaccine – A weakened or dead virus that is given to someone so that their body can be ready if they are later infected.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. What
2. How do viruses make you sick?
3. If you
4. How do vaccines protect you from viruses?

Extension Questions:

5. Which
6. Based on the law in your area, research what vaccines you must have had before being able to attend school this year. That includes all vaccines needed from birth until now.
7. What
8. Jenny's brother Mark is sick with a cold. What things should Jenny do to prevent herself from getting sick?
9. Research

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TWF READING

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