

Name: _____

Your Blood

What is blood made of? Why do we have blood? Have you ever wondered about blood? It's pretty amazing stuff! You have blood everywhere inside your body. When you cut yourself, you make a hole in your skin. Blood leaks out through the hole. If the cut is small, it soon stops bleeding. How does this happen?

Blood is made of different kinds of blood cells. These blood cells float in a yellowish liquid. The liquid is called **plasma**. It is mostly water. It carries blood cells and platelets through the blood vessels. It carries dissolved nutrients from the food you eat. Your body needs these nutrients to grow. Blood also carries waste products like carbon dioxide. Waste is something your body doesn't need.



There are different kinds of things floating in the plasma. Red blood cells give the blood its red color. There are millions of them in a single drop of blood. Red blood cells are too small to see with your eyes. They can be seen with a microscope. The **red blood cells** carry oxygen. Oxygen is part of the air you breathe. You cannot live without oxygen. You breathe oxygen into your lungs. The red blood cells take the oxygen from your lungs. They carry oxygen to every part of your body. When the blood has a lot of oxygen, it looks bright red.

There are white blood cells in your blood, too. They are bigger than red blood cells. There are not as many white blood cells as red blood cells. You may have thousands of white blood cells in one drop of your blood. **White blood cells** protect you from germs. These are like your body's police force. A white cell wraps itself around a germ and eats it up. Then the germ cannot hurt you.

Inside your blood, you also have platelets. They have no color. They are flat and round, like little plates. **Platelets** are what help you to stop bleeding if you cut your skin. When you cut your skin, blood runs out through the hole. Platelets gather around the cut. They form a plug that stops the bleeding. Tiny threads form in the plasma. The threads make a net across the cut. Red blood cells and white blood cells get caught in the net. Soon blood cannot flow through the cut anymore. The bleeding stops. The clot hardens and becomes a scab. Later, new skin will grow under the scab and close the cut.

Your body makes new blood cells every day. It makes new platelets, too. Old cells wear out. But it doesn't matter. Your body is always making new ones.

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Questions

- _____ 1. What is the liquid part of blood called?
A. plasma
B. platelets
- _____ 2. What kinds of blood cells float in the plasma?
A. red blood cells
B. white blood cells
C. both A and B
- _____ 3. Red blood cells carry _____.
A. nutrients
B. oxygen
- _____ 4. White blood cells _____.
A. stop a cut's bleeding
B. carry oxygen
C. protect you from germs
- _____ 5. Platelets _____.
A. carry oxygen
B. protect you from germs
C. stop a cut's bleeding

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How many of these can you write about? Think! Write! Check all the ones you answered.

What are the four main parts of blood? Write a sentence telling about each one.

Have you ever cut yourself? Write a paragraph and tell about what happened.
