

34 - Boogers

Be honest -- have you ever picked your nose? Hey, who hasn't? And whether you call them boogers, boogies, snots, nose goblins, or golden nuggets, pretty much everyone on earth has at some point in their life picked their nose. But why? What compels us to do something so gross?

Questions we answer on today's episode include:

What are boogers?

Where do they come from?

What do they do for your body?

Why do we like to pick them?

Are they safe to eat?

Is it true EVERYONE picks their nose? Well, King Tut didn't -- that's because he had a PERSONAL NOSE PICKER do it for him!

That's right, there's evidence to suggest the famous Egyptian Pharaoh, King Tut, had a personal nose picker! In the 1970s, archaeologists discovered scrolls from approximately 1350 BC that document payments of "three head of cattle plus food and lodging" to King Tutankhamen's personal nose picker ... for their nose-picking services! GROSS!!!

Grow their mind:

Mucus is a slimy substance, made up of mostly water that is found in your nasal cavities. And while it sounds pretty yuck -- mucus is very helpful and acts like your very own SUPER POWER! In fact, your nose and throat produce up to 2 quarts of it a day! But why?

Mucus is a lubricant to help keep your nose and sinuses wet, which protects them from irritation. It's also a shield to protect the incredibly thin and delicate tissue and blood vessels in your nostrils and sinuses. And finally, it's a trap to help catch intruders like dust, pollen, bacteria and viruses that you breathe in through your nose. Trapping them in your nose keeps them from traveling down to your lungs where they can cause allergies, infections or other illnesses.

Once the mucus has trapped the bad stuff, little hairs in your nose called cilia move it toward the front of your nose. Then, you either blow it out...Or, it sits there and dries out -- and THAT'S when it becomes... a booger!

PS - It's always a good idea to use a TISSUE and not your finger to get stuff out of your nose, and then wash or sanitize your hands afterwards. Nasal passages and boogers are specifically designed to catch germs and dirt so anything coming out of them is, by definition, packed with bad stuff!

Fun Home Activity: Fake Snot

It's time to slime! This recipe makes a little batch of fake slime/snot.

Put 1/2 cup of cornstarch in a mixing bowl with 1 cup of water. Add a few drops of brown and green food coloring. Now get in there and mix it up with your hands until you've got a bowl of stretchy snot-like slime!

When it's done, try blowing a teaspoon of flour on it so your kids can see how snot catches dust and other particles.

Parent note; when you're done, throw this out in the garbage NOT in the sink or toilet - it will harden and clog pipes!

Additional Resources

Here's a great [TED-Ed video](#) about how mucus helps your body.

Here's a [kid-friendly write-up](#) of a study about the distance that a sneeze travels!

Kid News

Lookout BTS - scientists this year re-created the voice of a 3,000 Egyptian mummy by making a 3D photo image of his vocal tract using a non-invasive CT scan, then printing out a 3D replica of it. Interestingly, during his lifetime the mummy was a priest whose job it was to sing and chant. His coffin actually bears an inscription that he wants his voice to be heard after his lifetime.

[More about the mummy here!](#)