

54 - Poop

Yes, we know it can be disgusting to talk about - but did you know the poo that comes out of you is just as important as the food going in? Did you know there's a reason you find it disgusting? Why is poop the shape it is?

You might be surprised to learn that poop is mostly water; and, as you may know from experience, the amount of water in your poop can vary. It mostly depends on what you've eaten. For example foods high in fiber like fruits and green veggies produce soft, easy to pass stool; whereas foods low in fiber can cause hard, dry stool which we call constipation. And fried, greasy foods, and especially spicy foods often come out pretty liquid-y. But on average, poop is around 75 percent water.

The 2nd most significant ingredient after water is bacterial biomass — which contains both living & dead organisms. Like the live cultures in yogurt -- they are also living in your gut. They're called probiotics.

The rest is mostly undigested carbohydrate, fiber, protein, fat, and dead cells from the walls of your gastrointestinal tract... Of course, if you accidentally swallow something that's totally indigestible, like a Lego piece, that'll hopefully show up sooner or later, too.

What You'll Learn

1. What does your poo say about you? What does a healthy bowel movement look & feel like?
2. What different colors does poop come in -- and what causes them?
3. Why are humans conditioned to be disgusted by poop and hate the smell?

Activities

1. Pooping helps keep your body healthy but so does washing yourself! Check out [this](#) messy bath time activity with the permission of an adult.
2. If you want a less messy activity, check out [ice fishing!](#) You'll just need to freeze your fish before bath time.
3. Everyone poops but owls also have a unique way of getting rid of some of the items their body can't use. Owls regurgitate bones, fur, and other parts they can't digest. Check out [this](#) website to learn more about owl pellets. There are also links to order your own owl pellets to dissect.

Additional Resources

Have you ever wondered what happens to your poop after you flush the toilet? Unless you have a septic system, it likely ends up in a waste water treatment facility. At the facility, they separate the solids, clean the water, and send it into a river, ocean, or other area. Watch [this](#) video to learn more about how London deals with their waste.

Kid News

Do you like to play in the snow? Do you throw snowballs or make a snowman? Did you know that animals like to play in the snow too? Washington D.C. doesn't get snow very often but the animals love it when they do. Check out [this article](#) about how the Pandas and other animals enjoyed their snow day at the National Zoo!¹

¹ This activity guide is for the Who Smarted? podcast www.WhoSmarted.com