

How does a scab help my cut get better?



You fall down and scrape your knee. A day later, there is a hard, dark crust on it, called a scab. What is a scab, and how does it help your cut get better?



Why?

1. Your skin is like a wall, and a cut is a hole in that wall.

The wall keeps the good things in, like your blood, and the bad things out, like dirt and germs. Through a hole, blood can leak out and germs can get in. Your body has to fix it, fast!

2. Tiny platelets rush over and plug the hole.

Platelets float in your blood all the time, waiting. They stick to the edges of the hole and to each other, and pile up. In just a few minutes they make a soft plug, and the bleeding stops.

3. Sticky threads hold it tight, and the top dries hard.

Your blood makes sticky threads, thinner than a spider's web. They weave over the platelets like a net. This is called a clot. The top of the clot touches the air, so it dries out and gets hard. That is the scab, a lid your body made by itself!

Try it! Be a scab watcher

You need: a scrape that is already healing

1. Look at the scab every day. Just look, don't pick!
2. Does it feel tight or itchy? That usually means it is healing.
3. When it falls off by itself, look at the new skin. It is pink at first. Watch it slowly turn to your own color.

What happened? Under the scab, new skin grows in from the edges, a tiny bit every day, until it covers the whole spot.

Video + more questions:
whywhywhykids.com/scab



scan with a grown-up