

Microbe Magic Experiments

<http://microbemagic.ucc.ie>

Inside your gut – How your blood clots!

When your skin is cut, the platelets in your blood rush straight there. Platelets are sticky and they stick together to form a clot. This clot protects you from invaders and as it dries, it forms a scab. The scab also stops invaders, protects the area against more damage and allows your skin to heal. Once your skin has healed, the scab falls off all by itself! The following experiment shows you how this process works!

What you will need:

- 4 ounces (oz) of icing sugar
- 1 tablespoon of water
- A slice of bread

What to do:

- Place the icing sugar in a bowl.
- Slowly add the water to the icing sugar, mixing all the time until you have a sticky mixture that drops slowly from the spoon
 - You may need a little less or a little more water to get the right thickness / runniness! Add the water slowly and mix very well. If it gets too runny, add a little more icing sugar.
- Spread the icing mixture onto the slice of bread and leave for 1 -2 hours (depending on how warm the room is. If the room is warmer, the process will take longer).
- What do you see?

What's happening?

As the icing dries on the bread, it goes from soft and sticky to hard (and it should taste pretty good too!). This is what happens when a blood clot sets. It forms a ‘scab’ (like the icing covering) and protects your skin (in this case the bread) from any ‘invaders’! The scab is necessary to protect the area until the skin has totally healed – you should not pick at scabs but let them fall off by themselves!

You can also see the same results when you make jelly but as very hot water is required to make jelly, you will need to speak to an adult before you try this and have adult supervision and aid when trying this.