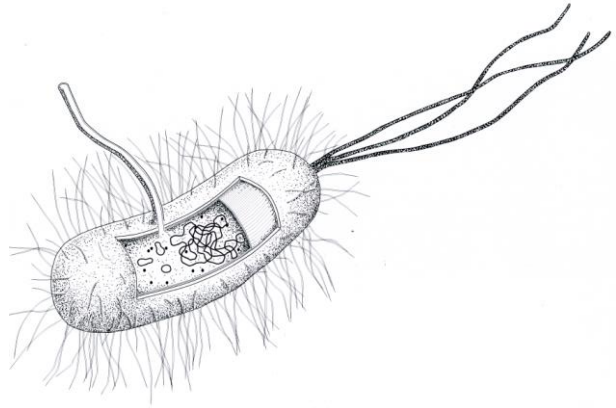


ARTIS MICROPIA

A closer look at poo

No poo without microbes

Your body is full of beneficial microbes. Most of your beneficial microbes live in your intestines. These intestinal bacteria and other microbes play a very important role in the digestion of the food you eat.



Because different species of animals all eat different things, they also have very different intestinal bacteria. By carefully examining these animals' poo, you can often see what they have eaten. You can also learn a lot about the microbes that inhabit their intestines.

What do you need?

- a scoop
- poo of three different animals
- three transparent jars with lids

Getting started!

1. Search for the poo of three species of animal, such as:
 - a. your rabbit, guinea pig, rat or mouse
 - b. your parakeet, parrot or chicken
 - c. a pony or horse.

TIP: You can also search for different kinds of poo at the petting zoo or riding stable.

2. Use a scoop to place some poo in a jar with a tightly-fitting lid. Avoid touching the poo with your bare hands! Remember to screw the lid on tightly.
3. Carefully examine the four kinds of poo in the jars. Do you see any differences?



Questions

Question 1: Which animals did you collect poo from?

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Question 2: What does the poo look like?

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Question 3: Can you tell from an animal's poo what it has eaten?

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Question 4: Horse or elephant poo often still contains a lot of hay. Why do you think this is the case?

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Question 5: Why do these large herbivores often have fat bellies?

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Question 6: Certain birds, such as pigeons and chickens, swallow particles of stone to improve their digestion. Can you see that from the poo? If so, how?

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Would you like to find out more about intestinal bacteria and the important role it performs in your intestines? Or would you like to do additional experiments? Then go to micropia.nl.