

APPLE DECAY

How will puncturing the apple's skin change the inside of the fruit?

This activity demonstrates how the hard enamel surface of teeth protects them, much like the skin of an apple protects the fruit inside.

Adults, make sure to help kids with this activity!

Supplies:

- Two apples
- Two paper bags
- A sharpened pencil
- A sharp knife

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Steps:

1. Use the pencil to poke a hole in one of the apples. This hole represents a break in tooth's enamel.
2. Make a hypothesis: What do you think will happen to the inside of the apple?
3. Place each apple in a separate bag and let sit for at least 24 hours.
4. After 24 hours, remove the apples and have an adult cut them in half.
5. What does each apple look like on the inside? Is there a difference between the apple with the hole poked in it and the apple without the hole?
6. The hole in the apple is similar to a cavity, which is a permanently damaged area in teeth that develop into tiny openings. What does the hole let in?

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Key takeaway from this activity:

Your teeth are covered in a hard coating called enamel that works much like an apple's skin does. Enamel can help keep bacteria out of the inner layers (dentin) of your teeth. However, when the enamel is broken, cavities may form that cause pain or sensitivity and make it hard to talk or chew foods. Many cavities can be prevented by brushing your teeth for two minutes twice a day, flossing and visiting your dentist every six months.

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