



Curiosity Guide #306

Skeletal System

Accompanies Curious Crew, Season 3, Episode 6 (#306)

Tendon Tricks

Investigation #2

Description

Challenge your friend by saying, "I can get your fingers to move!"

Materials

- A friend wearing a short-sleeve shirt, or rolled up, long sleeves
- Table

Procedure

- 1) If necessary, have your friend roll up his or her sleeve.
- 2) Have your friend lay her or his arm, palm-side up, on a table.
- 3) Ask your friend to relax his or her hand or arm.
- 4) Using your fingers, gently press down on your friend's forearm, between the elbow and the wrist.
- 5) Can you get your friend's fingers to move?

My Results

Explanation

Tendons are part of the skeletal system that attach the muscles in the body to bones. Tendons run from each finger up into the muscles in the forearm and control moving the hand. When the forearm muscles fire, the tendon is either pulled or straightened, moving individual fingers or parts of the fingers.

Pressing on the forearm causes the tendon to pull slightly on the fingers, making the fingers curl, without your friend controlling the movement. The tendons are visible under the skin of your wrist. Try wiggling your fingers or making a fist. Notice the tendons moving in your wrist. You can also see the tendons on the tops side of your hand when you flex your fingers up.

Think about it: Our bones are interesting! Bones provide our body's shape, offer protection to our organs, and provide support. The bones are one part of our skeletal system, which also includes ligaments, tendons, and cartilage. Ligaments attach bones to other bones; tendons attach muscles to bones; and cartilage serves as a cushion between bones. If it weren't for our skeletal system, we would be just one immovable bag of mushy parts. Thanks goodness for the skeletal system!

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