

Find the infected cell!



University
of Glasgow

<http://7bigspoons.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/cells-communicating.png>

Overview

- When a virus infects a cell, that cell needs to warn others that something bad is happening!
- One way it does this is by talking with a 'communicating' cell.
- This activity will help you understand how important communicating cells are.

What is a communicating cell?

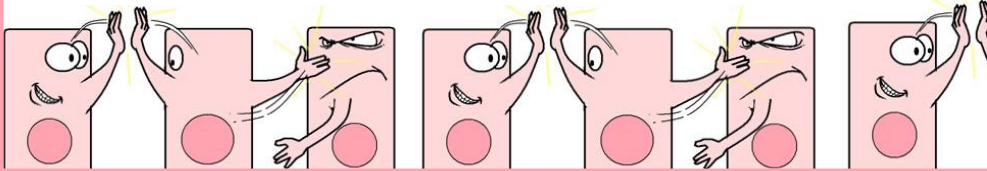
- A communicating cell tells your immune system all about the virus.
- They learn about the virus from the infected cells.
- They then travel to immune 'fire stations' to tell specialised immune cells all about the virus.
- This allows the immune fire station to send out the correct specialised immune cells to wherever the virus is to deal with it.

The game

The aim of the game is for the immune cell to find the infected cell with help from the communicating cell before all the lung cells die!

1. Ask the pupils to sit in a circle (10+ pupils).
2. Select one pupil to be the 'immune cell' and ask them to stand outside. Pick another pupil to be an 'infected cell' and one to be the 'communicating cell'. All other pupils are 'lung cells'.
3. The pupil who is the 'infected cell' is asked to wink at the other pupils—when this happens, the lung cell pupils should pretend to die.
4. Let the 'communicating cell' pupil know that they need to mirror the sitting position and movements of the 'infected cell' pupil.
5. Then ask the 'immune cell' pupil to come back in and introduce them to the 'communicating cell'.
6. The pupil who is the infected cell can then start winking at the others.
7. With the help of the communicating cell mirroring the infected cell, the immune cell now needs find the infected cell before all the lung cells die!

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List of materials required:

- 10 + pupils/children
- Teacher or adult to coordinate game

Length of game

Each game can last between 5-10 minutes. The game can be played multiple times per session

Variations of the game

1. Ask two pupils to be immune cells and to work together.
2. Assign two pupils to be communicating cells.
3. Give the role of infected cell to two-three pupils.
4. Allow the immune cell to try and find the infected cell without help from a communicating cell.
5. The communicating cell is only allowed to mirror certain movements the infected cell makes.

Do they variations make it easier or harder for the immune cell to find the infected cell?

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