

CAMP LITTLE VICTORS

Life-sized Organs Conversation Guide

Stomach

Your stomach is located in the upper left side of your belly. It is a stretchy sack of muscles that mixes and churns up the food you eat, and then adds acid and enzymes to break it down so that your body can use the nutrients in your food to help you grow and be strong.

Lungs

Your lungs are in your chest, and they are so large that they take up most of the room inside your ribs. Your rib bones actually protect your lungs. Every time you breathe, your lungs take oxygen out of the air you breathe and help it be absorbed into your blood to feed your heart and brain. If you put your hands on your chest and breathe deeply, you will feel your chest getting bigger. That is your lungs filling with air!

Heart

Did you know that your heart is not shaped like a Valentine and it's not located behind your left breast. Your heart is about the size of your fist, is shaped more like a giant strawberry and is actually located just to the left of the center of your chest. Your heart is a muscle that sends blood around your body. The right side of your heart receives blood from your body and pumps it to the lungs to pick up oxygen. The left side of your heart receives blood from your lungs and pumps it out to the rest of your body.

Brain

Your brain controls just about everything you do, which is why it's so important to protect it with a helmet when you are riding a bike, roller skating or participating in some sports. Your brain has five parts. The cerebrum is 85 percent of your brain's weight and is where your thoughts and voluntary movements come from. The cerebellum is at the back of your brain and controls balance and coordination. Your brain stem connects your brain to your spinal cord and controls the functions your body needs to stay alive, like breathing and circulating blood. Your pituitary gland is the size of pea and produces and releases hormones into your body. Finally, your hypothalamus is like a thermostat. It controls your body temperature.

Kidneys

Your kidneys are on your backside, essentially in the middle of your torso. Most of us have two kidneys, though we can live with just one. Kidneys are your blood's filtering system. Blood enters your kidneys where more than 1 million tiny filters remove the waste from your blood. The waste is combined with water to create urine (pee), which takes the waste out of your body.

Large intestine

Your large intestine is about five feet long and is the final part of your digestive tract. Also known as your colon, the large intestine's job is to absorb water and salts from the undigested food leaving your small intestine. It then reabsorbs water from the digestion process and eliminates undigested food and fiber and starts the process of getting rid of leftover waste products.

Small intestine

The small intestine (also referred to as the small bowel) is a tubular structure between the stomach and the large intestine that absorbs the nutrients from your food. It is approximately 20-25 feet in length and is about as big around as your middle finger.

Ribs

The ribs are flat, thin bones that provide protection for vital organs in the upper body, including the heart and lungs. There are twelve pairs of ribs, accounting for 24 total rib bones.

Spine

The spine is our body's central support structure. It keeps us upright and connects the different parts of our skeleton to each other. The spine is made up of a chain of bones and has many functions, such as carrying the weight of your head and allowing your body to move in different directions. The spine also surrounds and protects the spinal cord.