




GERMS ALIVE!



RATIONALE FOR ADVENTURE

This adventure teaches Wolf Scouts about the importance of keeping a clean room, proper hand washing, and covering their sneezes—through fun, hands-on science experiments.

TAKEAWAYS FOR CUB SCOUTS

- Knowing the proper way to wash hands
- Why we cover a sneeze
- What mucus does for our bodies
- The importance of cleaning our rooms
- Bacteria are present even if we can't see them.
- A Scout is clean, courteous. 

ADVENTURE REQUIREMENTS

Wolf Handbook, page 218

Complete at least five of the following requirements.

1. Wash your hands while singing the “Happy Birthday” song.
2. Play Germ Magnet with your den or your family. Wash your hands afterward.
3. Conduct the sneeze demonstration.
4. Conduct the mucus demonstration with your den or family.
5. Grow a mold culture. At a den or pack meeting, show what formed.
6. Make a clean room chart, and do your chores for at least one week.

NOTES TO DEN LEADER

This adventure has several choices based on which activities you choose to do with your den. These den meeting plans, when followed as written, meet the requirements to earn this adventure. If you choose to make adjustments, be sure you complete at least the minimum requirements.

This adventure does not include plans for a Meeting 3 den outing. If an outing is desired, all outing and transportation information would need to be planned in advance.

See the appendix for optional den meeting activities, including openings, gatherings, and closings.

MEETING 1 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Soap, water, and sink for washing hands. (If a sink is not readily available, use a bucket and a pitcher of water.)
- Items for the “Sink the Germs” game (Gathering)
 - Six beanbags
 - Removable tape
 - One large, open box with a picture of a sink drawn or taped to the front
 - One large printed copy of the “When to Wash Your Hands” chart (Meeting 1 Resources)

- Brightly colored glitter or washable paint for the “Germ Magnet” game (Activity 2)
- Items for the sneeze demonstration (Activity 3)
 - One blanket, old sheet, or tarp with concentric bull’s-eye rings drawn on it in washable ink. Each inner ring should be about 12 inches narrower than the one that surrounds it.
 - One balloon (check for latex allergies in the den)
 - Paper confetti
 - One sheet of paper to roll into a funnel
 - Tape
 - Tape measure

GATHERING: SINK THE GERMS

- Set the large open box on the floor to represent a sink.
- Use tape to mark a throwing line on the floor. Then tape the large copy of the “When to Wash Your Hands” chart (see Meeting 1 Resources) behind the line and place one beanbag over each of the six squares.
- As each Wolf Scout arrives, have them take a turn throwing the six beanbags, one by one, into the box. If time allows, have them try again.

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance as well as the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Find out who in the den has an upcoming birthday or had one recently. Have the den sing the “Happy Birthday” song to them. Tell them that the time it takes to sing the song twice is the same amount of time they should spend washing their hands.

TALK TIME

- Introduce the Germs Alive! adventure to the den. Tell the Cub Scouts in your den: Our hands are valuable tools. We use them every day. Because of this, hands become “germ magnets,” and when we touch other people, those germs move from hand to hand! So you need to remember to wash your hands often every day to make sure your “Wolf paws” are as clean as can be!
- Ask them to name the six times that it is very important to wash their hands. (Note: The answers were presented during the Gathering game.)
- Carry out business items for the den.
- Allow time for sharing among Cub Scouts.

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1: Soap and a Song (Requirement 1)

- Have Wolf Scouts wash their hands while singing the “Happy Birthday” song again.
- When someone works soap and warm water into a lather on both hands and then sings the “Happy Birthday” song twice, that will be long enough to wash away all the germs.

◆ Activity 2: Germ Magnet (Requirement 2)

- Have Scouts play the “Germ Magnet” game, using the directions in the *Wolf Handbook*.
- The game is likely to be messy, so you may want to move the den outside for this activity or use washable paint rather than glitter. Also, make sure that none of the Scouts rub their eyes while they still have glitter or paint on their hands.

◆ Activity 3: Sneeze Demonstration (Requirement 3)

- Tell the Scouts that when they played “Germ Magnet,” they were practicing the “A Scout is clean” part of the Scout Law. They learned that germs can spread and that we wash our hands to remove germs.
- Do the sneeze demonstration, using the materials you collected and involving the Scouts in every step as presented in the *Wolf Handbook*—except for popping the balloon, which should be done by an adult. The bull’s-eye represents each individual’s personal space, the popping balloon is like a sneeze, and the confetti represents the germs that are spread. (Note: Be sure Scouts pinch off the end of the balloon if they stop blowing, or the confetti in the balloon may get in their mouths.)
- In this activity, they see the importance of “A Scout is courteous.” Just as popping the balloon spreads the confetti, sneezing causes germs to spread quickly and powerfully. Scouts protect those around them and are courteous by sneezing into their elbows.

CLOSING

Gather the den in a circle. Starting with the denner, Scouts will each step into the center and shake hands with their fellow Wolf Scouts, moving counterclockwise and using the Cub Scout handshake. This continues until every Scout has their turn at initiating the handshakes.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirements 1, 2, and 3.
- Work together to clean up the meeting place.

MEETING 1 RESOURCES

GATHERING: SINK THE GERMS

Make a copy of this chart that is large enough to place each of the six beanbags over one of the reasons why we would need to wash our hands throughout the day.

When to Wash Your Hands

After playing with a pet



After using the bathroom



After sneezing, blowing your nose, or coughing



Before touching a cut or open sore



After playing outside



Before eating



MEETING 2 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Paper and colored pencils or crayons for “Design a Germ” drawings (Gathering)
- Paper, pencils, and rulers for making chore charts (Activity 1)
- Materials for the Sweeping the Germs Away relay (Activity 3)
 - One broom for each team of three Scouts
 - Empty 1- or 2-liter bottles with caps (one per team)
 - One permanent marker
 - Food coloring (one color per team)
 - Removable tape or chalk

GATHERING: DESIGN A GERM

- As they arrive, have all Scouts design and name their own “germ,” using the drawing materials you collected.
- These drawings may be saved and displayed at the next pack meeting.

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance as well as the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.
- Allow time for sharing among Cub Scouts.
- Ask the Cub Scouts in your den if they have ever thought about growing mold. Explain: *Molds are very small and can live and grow on many surfaces. We cannot see mold at first unless we look at them through a microscope. There are different types of mold that can grow in and outside of our homes.*
- Each Wolf Scout will create a mold “culture” (experiment) at home with the help of an adult (requirement 5). They will follow the directions in the *Wolf Handbook* and take photos each day of the results. These photos will be brought to the next meeting to share with the den.

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1: Chore Charts (Requirement 6)

- When preparing for this activity, communicate with parents or guardians in the den to discuss responsibilities Cub Scouts currently have at home and opportunities for new ones.
- Have each Scout draw a “clean room” chore chart based on the one in the *Wolf Handbook*, using a pencil, paper, and ruler. All Scouts should adapt the chart to fit their own situation. For example, they may have a cat instead of a dog, and they probably already have some assigned chores to add to the chart.
- Scouts will keep a record of the chores they complete during the week.

◆ Activity 2: Germ Tag (Optional)

- To start this game, one Scout will be a “germ.” At the word “Go,” the germ tries to touch the other players on the arm. Once a player is touched, they become a germ as well and try to catch the others. The game ends when everyone is a germ.
- Remind everyone that this is not a tackling, hitting, or grabbing game.

◆ Activity 3: Sweeping the Germs Away (Optional)

- Give a bottle to each team of three Wolf Scouts. Have the teams pour a half cup of water into their bottles and give each team a different color food dye to mix with the water. Place the cap on the bottle. Now they can draw faces on the bottles with the permanent marker, and each bottle becomes that team's "germ."
- Using the tape or chalk, mark separate start and finish lines for each team, making sure the lines are the same distance apart.
- On the word "Go," the relay begins. Members on each team take turns pushing the germ with their broom to the finish line and back, then hand off the broom to the next Cub Scout. The first team to finish sweeping their germ back and forth wins.
- If you have a small den, the Scouts can play as a single team, trying to beat their own time in two or three rounds. If you don't have an even number of Scouts, put the den chief on one of the teams.

CLOSING

All the Wolves gather in a circle and make the Cub Scout sign. Then they recite in unison, "A Scout is courteous," and each Scout says something that being "courteous" means to them.



Do-at-Home Project Reminder:

Remind Wolves to make their mold cultures at home, following the directions in the *Wolf Handbook*. For materials, each Cub Scout in your den will need a banana, a slice of bread, a piece of cheese, three paper plates, labels to put on the plates (so no one mistakenly eats the molds), and a pair of rubber gloves (check for latex allergies). They should take photos to compare at the next meeting, but each Scout should dispose of the mold cultures at home, wearing the gloves for safety. The molds will not be brought to the next meeting—only the photos.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirement 6.
- Work together to clean up the meeting place.

MEETING 3 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Dried pinto beans (20 to 30 per Scout) in plastic bags (Gathering)
- Photos of each Scout's mold culture from the Do-at-Home Project (Talk Time)
- Items for "mucus" demonstration (Activity 2)
 - Borax
 - Warm water
 - White school glue
 - Dirt, flour, glitter, or cocoa
 - Food coloring
 - Small bowls or plastic containers (two per Scout)
 - Quart-size resealable storage bags (one per Scout)
 - Paper plates (one per Scout)

GATHERING: BACKHAND BEANS

- As they arrive, give all Wolf Scouts a small bag filled with 20 to 30 dried pinto beans.
- The Scouts should dump the beans in a small pile on the floor or table. They then pick up one bean with the thumb and forefinger of one hand, transfer it to the thumb and forefinger of their other hand, and place it on the back of the first hand.
- Have the Cub Scouts continue this pattern, adding more beans to the back of their hand and trying not to drop them. If the beans do fall off, have them start over.

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance as well as the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- All the Wolves make the Cub Scout sign. Then they recite in unison, "A Scout is clean," and each Scout says something that being "clean" means to them.

TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.
- Allow time for sharing among Cub Scouts.
- Have everyone tell about the chores they did during the week.
- Have the Scouts display and compare their photos of the mold cultures they grew at home. Ask them: *Which of the three types of molds—banana, bread, or cheese—grew the fastest?*

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1: Mucus Demonstration (Requirement 4)

- Have the Scouts conduct their "mucus" demonstrations, using the materials you collected and following the directions in the *Wolf Handbook*.
- This activity will help Wolves understand the role of mucus in protecting us from germs. Give each Scout the chance to mix their own bag, so they can see firsthand evidence of the chemical change when the Borax and glue interact.
- Let them play with their slimy creations for a few minutes. Ask: *What does it feel like? How do you think something so slimy could protect your body?*
- Now have each Cub Scout do a filtering test by putting their fake mucus on a paper plate and gently blowing a pinch of dirt, glitter, flour, or cocoa onto it. Ask: *Does this help you see how the mucus in the membranes inside your nose might keep you from breathing in germs, bacteria, and viruses?*

◆ Activity 2: Wolf! Wolf! (Optional)

- All the Scouts sit in a circle around the Cub Scout who is "It," or "the wolf." The Scouts in the circle say, "Wolf! Wolf! What are you doing?"
- The wolf can respond by saying a one-sentence action that protects a person from germs, like "brushing my teeth," "washing my hands," or "cleaning my room." But if the wolf says "Chasing you," the other Scouts must scatter to keep from being tagged by the wolf—just like a germ floating through the air.

CLOSING

- The whole den forms a friendship circle. Everyone crosses one arm over the other and grasps the hand of the person on either side.
- Close by asking Scouts what song do you sing when you wash your hands? Then lead everyone in singing the "Happy Birthday" song.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirements 4 and 5.
- Work together to clean up the meeting place.

Upon completion of the Germs Alive! adventure, your Wolves will have earned the adventure loop shown here. Make sure they are recognized for their completion by presenting the adventure loops, to be worn on their belts, as soon as possible according to your pack's tradition.

