

# Potato in a Jar Experiment



## Quick Description

An experiment to show children how germs from your hands can be transferred to objects.

## Required Materials

- ★ 4 glass jars
- ★ 1 potato
- ★ Knife
- ★ Hand soap



## Preparation

Wash glass jars and lids in hot, soapy water. Dry thoroughly. Lightly wash and dry potato to remove visible dirt.

## Directions

- ★ Divide the children into two groups.
- ★ Following outdoor play, have one group of children rinse their hands with water **only** and have the other group wash their hands well for 15 seconds with ordinary hand soap. Each group should touch only one piece of potato after washing their hands.
- ★ Place potatoes into separate glass jars and cover tightly with lid. Label jars.
- ★ After 5-7 days, observe and record the results of the experiment.

## Variations

- ★ Experiment by dividing the children into smaller groups and use different types of soaps or different types of “dirty hands” (e.g., sneezing, coughing, playing in dirt).
- ★ This experiment could be done after activity “*The Dirt on Germs*”.

## Facilitating Comments

- ★ What are some differences seen in all three potatoes?
- ★ When we don’t wash our hands, we spread germs everywhere.

## Major Learning Concepts

- ★ Germs can be spread through contact
- ★ Importance of handwashing