



Brain Mold Activity

Objectives:

- To demonstrate how brain injuries can be prevented by wearing a helmet

Materials required:

- Brain mold (you can purchase one online)
- Large mixing bowl
- Whisk
- Tea towel
- Plastic wrap
- Large plate
- Helmet

Ingredients for the gelatin brain:

- 6 boxes (85g each) peach or watermelon flavored gelatin powder (e.g. Jello)
- 1 can (385 ml) evaporated skimmed milk (99.5% fat free)
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of vegetable oil or vegetable cooking spray (to lubricate the plastic mold)
- 3½ cups (875 ml) of water (2½ cups or 625 ml boiled, 1 cup or 250 ml cold)
- Green food coloring

Instructions:

1. Coat in the inside of the mold with 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of vegetable oil. Wipe off any excess oil.
2. Empty gelatin powder into a large mixing bowl.
3. Add 2 ½ cups (625 ml) of boiling water. Stir with a whisk until completely dissolved, about 3 minutes.
4. Add 1 cup (250 ml) cold water.
5. Add skimmed milk and stir for 2 minutes.
6. Add a few drops of green food coloring to enhance the 'flesh' tone. Stir again.
7. Pour gelatin mixture into the plastic mold.

Adapted from a resource (or publication) produced by the City of Hamilton Public Health Services. Translated and distributed by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation.

8. Leave approximately one inch space from the top of the mold.
9. Set brain mold into an empty bowl or wrap a tea towel around its base to keep it upright and level.
10. Allow to set in the refrigerator overnight.

Extracting the gelatin from the mold:

1. Carefully shake the mold until the gelatin loosens from the mold.
2. Using a plate that is larger than the mold, place the plate over the top of the mold and turn the mold over.
3. Shake the mold again.
4. Continue to carefully shake the mold until the gelatin brain releases onto the plate.
5. Cover the gelatin brain with a plastic food wrap and return it to the refrigerator until you are ready to put it on display.

Teaching Strategy(s):

- Place the brain on display for participants to see how susceptible the brain is to injury.
- Place the brain in a helmet and drop it on the floor. Do the same thing without the helmet and note the difference between wearing a helmet versus not wearing a helmet.