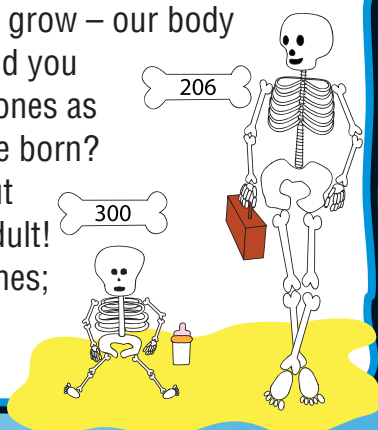


TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT HUMAN BONES

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1

From the time we are born till when we reach adulthood (and even after that), we continue to grow – our body becomes bigger and stronger. But did you know that you actually have fewer bones as an adult compared to when you were born? Yes, at birth you have 300 bones, but end up with only 206 bones as an adult! Fear not, you have not lost these bones; they have simply fused (joined-up) with each other.



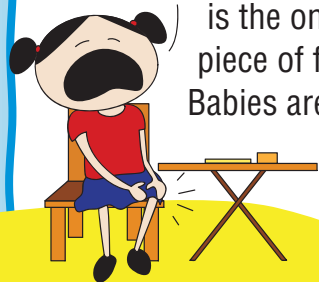
2

You may know your thigh bone (you can call it the femur to sound intelligent!) to be the longest and heaviest bone in your body. But did you know that it is also the strongest?

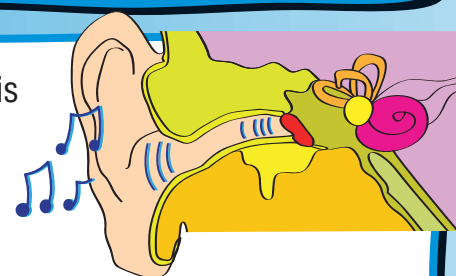
It is, in fact, stronger than concrete! A small matchbox sized piece of this bone can support nearly 9 tons of weight – four times the amount concrete can support! That is insanely strong – especially if you consider the fact that this bone is hollow!

3

Ooowch!!! Did you know that the largest joint in your body is the one in your knee? This joint is protected by a piece of flattish bone called the patella (kneecap). Babies are born with only a tough, flexible tissue (known as cartilage) covering this joint. But between the ages of 2-5 years, this cartilage starts hardening up to develop into the kneecap.



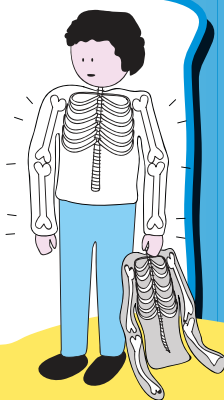
The smallest bone in your body is called the stapes (also called the stirrup bone). It is found in your inner ear and measures only 2-3mm in size! Did you know that this tiniest of bones has a big and important job in your body? Shaped like a 'U', this bone receives all sound vibrations that reach your inner ear and passes them along to your inner ear (cochlea), where it is finally interpreted by your brain.



4

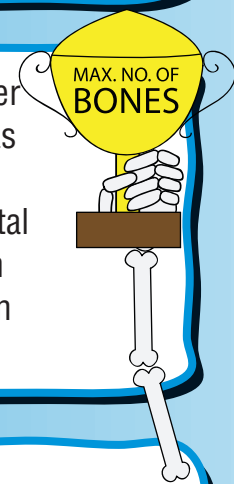
5

We all know that some organs in our body can continuously rejuvenate (re-grow). But did you know that your bones can also do that? Yes, bones not only repair themselves, but also re-grow. Their constant day-to-day activity wears down your bones, but they are remade just as quickly. In fact, this happens so regularly that in seven years an old bone is completely replaced by a new bone, and we get a practically new skeleton!



6

The parts of your body with the maximum number of bones are your hands – each of your hands has 27 bones, 29 joints and 123 ligaments! In fact, of the 206 bones in the human body, a total of 106 are found in just our hands and feet (27 in each hand and 26 in each foot). That is more than half the bones of the body!



7

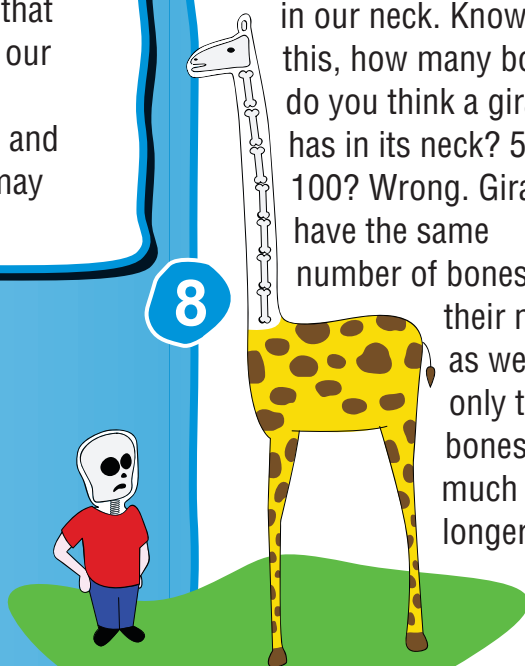
The human face is made up of 14 bones that protect our sense organs of sight, taste and smell. Did you know that these facial bones are constantly moving, throughout our lives, even if we don't really notice their movement? As we become older, these movements become more and more apparent – this is why your grandfather's face may appear 'sunken'.

10

Gorham's (pronounced GOR-amz) disease (also known as vanishing bone disease) is one of the most mysterious diseases known. In this disease, instead of getting repaired, a fractured bone breaks down gradually until it completely disappears. What is strange is that although this disease has no known treatment, in some cases, the disease gets cured, mysteriously, all by itself. No one knows how or why, but in these cases, its symptoms completely disappear!

8

There are seven bones in our neck. Knowing this, how many bones do you think a giraffe has in its neck? 50? 100? Wrong. Giraffes have the same number of bones in their neck as we do; only their bones are much longer!



9

The horizontal bones of our chest are called ribs. These bones form a cage that protects two of our most important organs - the heart and lungs. As a result of our breathing, each of these ribs move almost 50 lakh times a year! But strong as they are, sometimes even a strong sneeze is enough to damage these rib bones. That is scary!

