

Activity 2 Extracting DNA from saliva (or a Strawberry)

What do I need?

- 1- A glass or transparent cup
- 2- Table salt
- 3- Tap water
- 4- Washing-up liquid (detergent)
- 5- Saliva or you can use a strawberry if you prefer!
- 6- A cocktail stick or toothpick – to spool the DNA strands
- 7- Hand sanitiser (which contains alcohol)

What do I do?

Step 1 – Collect your saliva in the glass. Gargle with a mouthful of water for 1 minute and then spit the water into the glass. You can use a strawberry instead of saliva if you want, just mush it up in some water.

Step 2 – Add between 5 and 10 drops of detergent into the glass. Mix the detergent and saliva by moving the glass in circles.

Step 3 – Add a small amount (a pinch) of salt and swirl again for about 30 seconds to mix all of the materials.

Step 4 – Finally, pour about the same amount of hand sanitiser into the glass as there is water and wait a few minutes for the solution to become clear.

Step 5 – Dip the cocktail stick into the liquid and carefully lift up the strands of DNA. What does the DNA look like? Is it what you expected?