



Platelets

STEM Sims

Lesson 2: Evaluating Platelets

Platelets are particularly important because they cause clotting. If your body has too few platelets, you may not be able to stop bleeding; if you have too many platelets, you could have serious clots that might affect blood flow to your brain. It's also important that the platelets are formed correctly. Abnormal platelets can cause complications. See if you can identify normal and abnormal platelets.

Doing the Science

1. Start the Platelets Simulation by clicking on the “Sim” tab.
2. Click on the “Evaluating” button.
3. Drag the view so that you can see what the abnormal platelets look like in the reference. Once you know the difference in appearance of the normal and abnormal platelets, click on the “Smear” button.
4. Record your Smear ID number in Table 1.
5. View the smear and determine if the platelets are normal or abnormal. Click on the corresponding button and click “Identification”.
6. After you’ve made your identification, click “Next”.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 until you have viewed all 10 smears.

Table 1.

Trial	Smear ID Number	Normal (N)/ Abnormal (A)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Do You Understand?

1. How does the appearance of a normal platelet differ from that of an abnormal platelet?

2. What are some complications or conditions caused by abnormal platelets?