

The brain crew

The brain is the boss of our bodies. It controls everything we do. The brain is made of several parts, and each controls a different body function.

The cerebrum

The cerebrum is the largest part of the brain and is often considered the thinking part. It allows you to solve math problems, play video games, feed your dog, remember your mom's birthday and draw pictures.

The cerebrum is made up of two halves (right and left). The right half helps with things like understanding and learning music, colors and shapes. The left side helps with math, reasoning and speech. Interestingly, the right half of the cerebrum controls the left side of body, and the left half controls the right side of the body. As a result, both sides help with movement. The motor control area in the cerebrum controls movement and allows you to move the way you want to.

The cerebellum

Next up is the cerebellum. The cerebellum is located in the back of the brain, just below the cerebrum. It controls balance, posture and coordination (how your muscles work together). Because of the cerebellum, you can stand upright, move around and keep your balance all at the same time. For example, the cerebellum helps you keep your balance while riding a bike.

The brain stem

Another part of the brain that is small, but mighty, is the brain stem. The brain stem is located beneath the cerebrum and in front of the cerebellum. The brain stem connects the brain to the spinal cord. Its job is to control all the functions that are necessary for your body to stay alive, such as breathing, digesting food and circulating blood. The brain stem also controls the muscles that work even when you do not think about them, such as the stomach and heart. Also, it is responsible for sorting through the millions of messages that go back and forth between the brain and the rest of the body.

The hippocampus

The hippocampus is a part of the brain that is really cool. For example, it helps you remember your way from the classroom to the playground. The hippocampus is the part of the cerebrum that deals with memory. You have two kinds of memory: short-term and long-term. Trying to remember what you had for breakfast today is an example of using your short-term memory. Trying to remember your birthday party a year ago is an example of using your long-term memory. Your hippocampus helps you transfer information from short-term memory to long-term memory and vice versa.

The pituitary gland

The pituitary gland is a tiny, but important, part of your brain about the size of a pea. Its job is to produce hormones, which help you grow. So, if your clothes from last year are too small, you may blame your pituitary gland for producing these hormones.

The hypothalamus

Last but not least is the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus sits right in the middle of your brain. It is like your brain's inner thermometer. It knows what your body temperature should be. It even knows when your body should sweat or shiver. The hypothalamus also lets you know when you are hungry or thirsty.

You must remember that your brain is always working, whether you are sleeping or awake. The brain is in charge every day. It controls everything you do, from the movement of your arms to your thoughts. The brain has a huge job but somebody has to do it!

