

Types of muscle

The human body is made up of three different types of muscle: skeletal, smooth and cardiac.

Fill in the missing spaces below using the following list of words:

Missing words:

working

tired

relax

tricep

blood

veins

move

smooth

faster

Skeletal muscles

Skeletal muscles help us to move. They are joined to the bones by tendons and they pull the bones to _____ them. They have a stripy appearance with strands of light and dark muscle tissue. We call them 'voluntary' muscles because we can choose to move or rest them. They get _____ and ache when we use them a lot.

Skeletal muscles often work in pairs, for example the biceps and triceps. The bicep muscle is found in the front of the upper arm. It contracts (squeezes) to bend the arm, while the tricep at the back relaxes. To straighten the arm, the bicep relaxes and the _____ contracts.

Smooth muscles

Smooth muscles can be found in some of the body's organs, such as the stomach, as well as in blood vessels (_____ and arteries). They are called 'smooth' because they have a _____ appearance. Our brain doesn't need to tell them to move – they contract and _____ by themselves. We call them 'involuntary' muscles.

Cardiac muscles

Cardiac muscles line the walls of the heart. Like smooth muscles, these are 'involuntary'. They contract to push _____ out of the heart. Cardiac muscles don't get tired. They keep on _____, even while you are asleep. They have a stripy appearance like skeletal muscles. When you exercise, they work much _____ and harder to pump more oxygen-filled blood around your body.

Types of muscles – answers

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Cardiac muscles

Cardiac muscles line the walls of the heart. Like smooth muscles, these are 'involuntary'. They contract to push **blood** out of the heart. Cardiac muscles don't get tired. They keep on **working** even while you are asleep. They have a stripy appearance like skeletal muscle. When you exercise, they work much **faster** and harder to pump more oxygen-filled blood around your body.