THE HUMAN BODY - HICCUPS



Out of nowhere – in class, in the car, on the phone, or watching television – at any moment, it can happen. Hiccup. The dreaded hiccup. Has anyone ever really found a cure for hiccups? Some people believe that holding your breath, drinking water, standing on your head, or doing all three at the same time can help cure hiccups. Nothing ever works. How do we even get hiccups?

Have you ever felt your eyebrow twitching? It starts suddenly, just like hiccups. Both are caused by the same thing, muscle spasms. When you get the hiccups, a muscle in your chest starts contracting. It rushes air into your lungs. After air rushes in, the sudden closing of the valve at the top of your lungs causes the "hic" sound. This happens to us all throughout our bodies all the time. It is a natural bodily function.

Luckily, most hiccups don't last that long – only a few minutes at the most. However, there once was a man who had the hiccups for sixty-eight whole years. Can you imagine? He had hiccups for sixty-eight years, through work and sleep. I guess he could have used a good scare.

Answer the following questions about the passage you read.

1) What causes hiccups?
   a. Choking
   b. Muscle spasms
   c. Tiredness
   d. Eating quickly

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2) Which of these do people believe will cure hiccups?

a. Turning upside down
b. Taking a jog
c. Eating biscuits
d. Saying the alphabet



3) How long do most hiccups last?

a. 3-5 seconds
b. 1-2 hours
c. 1-3 minutes
d. 1-2 days

4) Fill in the blanks to spell a word that means the same as "Out of nowhere"

s ___ ___ ___ ___ n ___ ___

5) Why do you think the passage said "he could have used a good scare"?

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