

Scurvy Printable Reading Comprehension

Name _____

Scurvy is a horrible disease that results from an acute lack of Vitamin-C over time. Vitamin-C is most commonly found in fruits and vegetables. During the Age of Exploration, sailors on long ocean voyages often contracted Scurvy, as food supplies quickly spoiled, reducing diets to salted beef (though in many cases fresh meat has enough Vitamin-C to prevent or cure Scurvy), dried grains, or in desperate situations, anything that could be eaten. Sailors during this time believed Scurvy was caused by a wide range of potential culprits including putrid air rising from swamps. The idea that the disease was caused by a lack of Vitamin-C was not confirmed until 1932. According to some estimates, Scurvy accounted for the deaths of over two million soldiers during the Age of Exploration.

Sailors with Scurvy would first experience weeks of malaise or fatigue. As the disease worsened, bone and joint pain intensified and sailors would develop sores that failed to heal. In later stages, gums would swell, teeth would fall out, and mental changes such as agitation and confusion would manifest. In its final stages, scurvy would result in the swelling of various parts of the body, convulsions, and organ failure. Even in its later stages, the effects of Scurvy could be reversed if Vitamin-C was introduced.

1. During the Age of Exploration...

- A. sailors knew the cause of scurvy.
- B. sailors believed scurvy was caused by a lack of vitamin-c.
- C. sailors believed scurvy was caused by air over swamps
- D. sailors believed scurvy was caused by spoiled meat.

2. The cause of scurvy was discovered...

- A. during the Age of Exploration.
- B. before the Age of Exploration.
- C. after the Age of Exploration.
- D. in desperate situations.

3. Which of the following diets could result in scurvy?

- A. Spoiled or salted meat over an entire month
- B. Spoiled and fresh meat over an entire month
- C. Fresh meat and grains over an entire month
- D. Vegetables and spoiled meat over an entire month

4. Which was NOT a symptom of scurvy?

- A. Sores throughout the body
- B. Joint pain
- C. Confusion
- D. Sneezing and coughing

5. In its final stages, scurvy...

- A. cannot be reversed
- B. can be reversed with vitamin-c
- C. can be reversed with medicine
- D. can be reversed without vitamin-c

6. What does “intensified” mean in the following sentence?

As the disease worsened, bone and joint pain intensified and sailors would develop sores that failed to heal.

- A. magnified
- B. clarified
- C. erupted
- D. became worse

7. Which of the following is accurate?

- A. The first paragraph tells about the history of scurvy and the second paragraph tells about the ways people could get scurvy
- B. The first paragraph tells about why sailors got scurvy and the second paragraph tells about signs of scurvy
- C. The first paragraph tells why sailors got scurvy and the second paragraph explains how scurvy is diagnosed today
- D. The first paragraph tells about how sailors spread scurvy and the second paragraph tells about signs of scurvy