



Using raw chicken quarters to explore tissues in an anatomy & physiology lab

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Abstract

The switch to online learning at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to the laboratory portion of Human Anatomy & Physiology, but has also had a positive impact on the “post-COVID” teaching in our course. Prior to the pandemic, the course utilized human models and cat cadavers in laboratory activities, homework consisted of worksheets and exams were performed during the lab once every 3 weeks. During the pandemic we began working with virtual modeling software of the human body. We continue to use this software because it has allowed us to deliver laboratory unit exams fully online; freeing up face-to-face time for more hands-on laboratory activities. A laboratory activity we have added is a demonstration of the tissue level of organization of the human body using raw chicken quarters. In the week prior to this activity students have studied the microscopic histology of human tissues and noted their anatomical and physiological properties in a chart. It is our observation that students find learning about tissues at the microscopic level abstract, and they have a difficult time transferring this information to further understanding of the human body. In the new “follow-up” activity the students interact with the tissues in a much more tangible way. In groups the students work together to identify and describe the physical characteristics of each tissue type and link this back to the anatomical and physiological properties of that tissue type noted during the prior session. Students also photographed each tissue and add labels. At the conclusion of the activity, students show me their filled-out charts and labeled photographs to get credit for being present in lab. This activity would also lend itself well as an online/at home exercise.

Keywords: Anatomy & Physiology, tissues

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