



# Heart obstacle course



Create a life-size “Heart obstacle course” where children roleplay blood circulating through the body.

## The obstacle course shows tamariki how blood:

- travels from the heart to the lungs to pick up oxygen
- delivers it to the body through the arteries
- returns via the veins back to the heart to repeat the cycle.

## What you need:

- Chalk to draw the outline of a body
- Red and blue string, ribbons, yarn or rope (arteries and veins)
- Large red/pink cushion (heart)
- Two inflated blue balloons (lungs)
- Several small red and blue beanbags/balls (blood cells)
- Playground equipment to create an obstacle course (e.g. tunnel, hula hoops, cones)
- Arrow cards

## Set-Up:

**1. Draw the body** on the ground with chalk. Ensure the outline takes up enough space so that tamariki can move around inside it (up to 3 metres by 5 metres).

### 2. Mark the key organs

Place simple signs or cut-outs:

- Heart in the chest area (use a red beanbag, pillow or laminated heart picture)
- Lungs on each side of the heart (blue balloons or light-coloured cushions or pictures)

### 3. Create the blood pathways with string

Use:

- Blue string = deoxygenated blood
- Red string = oxygenated blood

Lay the strings on the ground as shown on the diagram:

- Blue pathway: from the *body outline* → *heart* → *lungs*
- Red pathway: from the *lungs* → *heart* → *body outline*

**4. Set up obstacles** along the red and blue string pathways for tamariki to climb over and crawl through. Create obstacles that suit the skill level of your tamariki.

## 5. Add props (optional)

- Blue beanbags/balls = deoxygenated blood
- Red beanbags/balls = oxygenated blood
- Arrow cards to show direction
- Traffic cones or hoops to mark turning points

## Play “Be the blood!” in the heart obstacle course

### Step 1: Tamariki become the blood

Tell tamariki they are the blood cells moving through the body.

### Step 2: Start in the body

Children begin at a point on the body outline (e.g. feet or hands).

### Step 3: Walk the blue pathway

They follow the blue string to the heart, then to the lungs.

Explain:

- “You’re carrying used blood that needs fresh oxygen.”

### Step 4: Oxygen time

At the lungs, swap a blue beanbag/ball for a red one to show they’ve picked up oxygen.

### Step 5: Walk the red pathway

Children follow the red string back to the heart, then around the rest of the body.

Explain:

- “You’re delivering oxygen to all the parts of the body!”

### Step 6: Repeat

They return to the starting point to begin the cycle again, just like real blood.

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