

The Skin

Body & health

Three layers, what each contains, and why it is called an organ.

A layered barrier that regulates temperature, blocks pathogens, senses the world, prevents water loss and synthesises vitamin D. It is an organ by every definition.

AREA
~2 m²

LAYERS
3

RENEWAL
~28 days

- Epidermis: the outer barrier, no blood supply, replaced about monthly.
- Dermis: collagen, blood vessels, nerves, hair follicles, sweat glands.
- Hypodermis: fat and connective tissue, insulation and cushioning.
- Melanin in the epidermis absorbs UV.
- About 2 m² and 4 kg in an adult.
- Sweat cools by evaporation, not by leaving the body.

LOOK FOR IT

A first-degree burn affects only the epidermis; a second-degree burn reaches the dermis and blisters.

Skin makes vitamin D from UVB. Behind glass produces none, because glass blocks that wavelength.