

# Your Nervous System

Tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing, thinking, dreaming, breathing, running, sleeping, laughing, singing, remembering, feeling pain or pleasure, painting, writing...you couldn't do any of these things without your central nervous system!

## What is the nervous system?

It is made up of your brain, your spinal cord, and an enormous network of nerves that thread throughout your body; it's the control center for your entire body. Your brain uses information it receives from your nerves to coordinate all of your actions and reactions.

## What are nerves?

They're the thin threads of nerve cells, called neurons that run throughout your body. Bundled together, they carry messages back and forth just the way that telephone wires do. Sensory nerves send messages to the brain and generally connect to the brain through the spinal cord inside your backbone. Motor nerves carry messages back from the brain to all the muscles in your body.

## How does the nervous system work?

Your brain is in charge, it is like the captain of your ship. Your brain sends messages to all parts of your body and gets messages back. The messages are sent through your nerves, which go from your brain all through your body. Your nerves look like branches of a tree. Your nerves carry the messages and then tell your body what to do. When you feel an itch on your arm, nerves are sent out with a message from your arm to your brain. Then your brain sends a message along the nerves to your fingers to itch. A message is sent back to the brain, mission accomplished.

