

# Two Points Or One?

## Materials

Toothpicks

## Procedure

1. Have one person get two toothpicks and the other person hold out their hand and close their eyes.
2. The person without the toothpicks keeps their eyes closed while the other gently pokes both toothpicks onto the palm of their partner's hand, about one inch apart. Ask how many points they feel.
3. Now (with eyes still closed) move the toothpicks progressively closer until only one point is felt. Try moving from one inch to one centimeter to one millimeter, or roughly these.
4. Repeat the procedure on a fingertip. Are the toothpicks held closer or farther away when only one point is felt?
5. Repeat the same steps on other parts of the body, especially the back. Be sure partners trade roles and get a chance to feel this sensation.

*Different parts of the body play different roles in feeling sensations. The hands need a great deal of detailed sensation, so nerve endings are closer together. Points close together can be more easily distinguished than on the back or on the legs, etc. Other, similar experiments can be tried, such as stroking a feather or feeling ice on different parts of the body.*

