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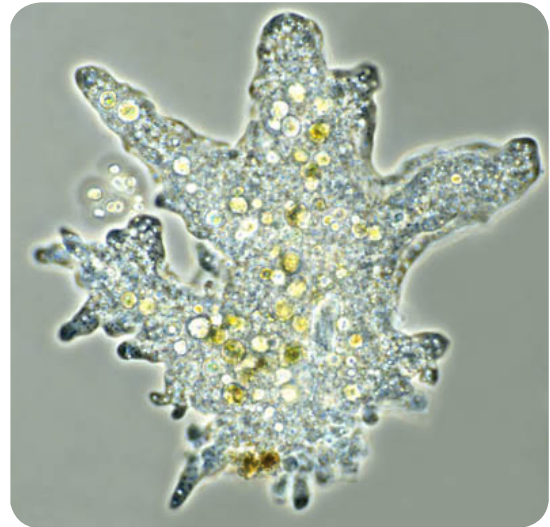
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# Reproductive Strategies

## Animal Profile:

### **AMOEBA** (*Amoeba proteus*)

Take one look through a microscope at a drop of healthy pond water and you'll find a ton of one-celled organisms zooming about. Some of these cells move by fluttering tiny hair-like cilia, while others are propelled by large whip-like flagella. You'll also come across a lot of blobby cells creeping about and engulfing other cells by extensions of their bodies. These one-celled critters are known as amoeba, and they move and feed by extending bulges called pseudopodia (false feet). When an amoeba moves, it reaches pseudopodia away from its edges and anchors them at their tips. The rest of the cell's insides stream into the pseudopodia until the entire amoeba has slurped into a new location.



Steve Durr

*Amoeba proteus* with several green algae trapped inside food vacuoles.

Amoebas are found all over the place, from oceans to soil. They play a very important ecological role by making meals of the huge number of bacteria, algae, and small protists found on this planet. One common amoeba is the giant amoeba, *Amoeba proteus*. Giant amoebas reproduce by binary fission, a fancy word that means splitting in two. When a giant amoeba begins to divide, it pulls its pseudopodia in to form a kind of ball. After its nucleus doubles, the amoeba constricts in the middle, as if a belt were being pulled tighter and tighter around the cell. Finally, the two new cells pinch apart, send out pseudopodia, and slink away from each other. In this way, two identical "daughter" cells are created from one. When conditions are right, this amoeba can divide every 48 hours.