

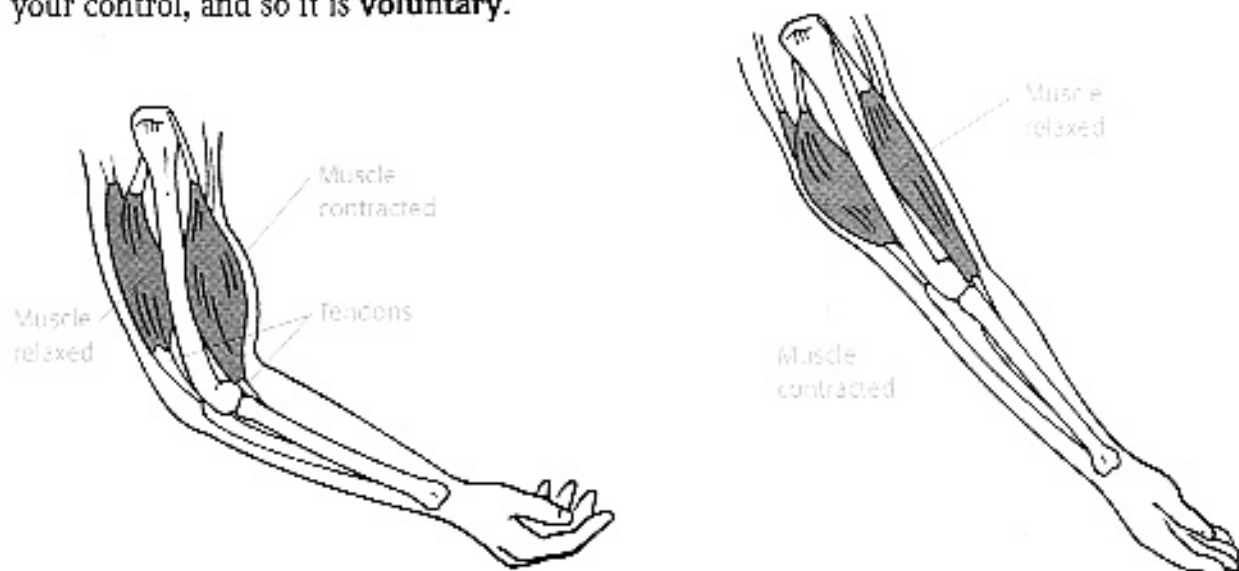
# The Muscular System

How does your muscular system move your body?

Your **muscular system** includes all the muscles that move your body and things within your body. There are three main types of muscles. **Skeletal muscles** are attached to your skeleton. **Smooth muscle** is found in your digestive tract and in blood vessels. **Cardiac muscle** is found only in the heart.

Tough connective tissues called **tendons** connect skeletal muscles to bones. Skeletal muscles pull on bones to cause movement. Muscles pull by contracting, or shortening. Movement of your skeletal muscles is under your control, and so it is **voluntary**.

Smooth muscle contracts whether or not you think about it. This type of muscle action is **involuntary**. Contractions of smooth muscle move food through the digestive tract and blood around the body. The action of cardiac muscle is also involuntary, so you don't have to think about making your heart beat. Cardiac muscle is the strongest muscle tissue in your body because your heart must beat continuously your entire life.



Muscles work in pairs to move bones. When one muscle in the pair contracts, the other relaxes.

## Show What You Know

Match the muscle type with where it is found.

- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1. _____ skeletal | a. stomach |
| 2. _____ smooth   | b. heart   |
| 3. _____ cardiac  | c. arms    |