



Role of Peptides and Peptidases in Immune Responses

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Message from the Guest Editor

Peptidases control key functions of the innate and adaptive immune responses. These include antigen processing and the presentation of immunogenic peptides; cell cytotoxicity through the activation of pro-granzymes; cell adhesion and migration; chemokine activation and, thereby, leukocyte recruitment; and response to various bacterial and viral infections. The expression of peptidases, their activity, and their subcellular localization are associated with the distinct development and differentiation stages of immune cells. In contrast to the traditional view, recent studies have implicated peptidases in processes occurring outside lysosomes and endosomes. Peptidases can be found in the nucleus, the cytosol, and extracellularly, either secreted or bound to the plasma membrane. Peptidases localized outside lysosomes have been associated with different physiological processes such as prohormone activation, apoptosis and cell migration, while their extracellular localization is associated with the degradation of the proteins of the extracellular matrix as part of tissue remodeling and cell migration.





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