



The Role of Fibrinolytic System in Health and Disease

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Message from the Guest Editor

The proteolytic enzyme plasmin is the central component of the fibrinolytic system (also known as the plasminogen–plasmin system). Originally thought to be a regulator of fibrin removal, it is now known to be more complex. It consists of several serine proteases and their inhibitors (serpins). These are involved in many physiological functions in the pathogenesis of many diseases, including atherosclerosis, obesity, cancer, immune disorders, neuronal degeneration, trauma, inflammation and aging. Knowledge of their role in cancer enables their use as a prognostic factor. Therapeutic use of various forms of proteases derived from this system has been employed in the form of thrombolytic agents. In addition, small molecules designed to inhibit many of the components of the fibrinolytic system are now available in clinical trials, aimed at the treatment of these various disorders. This remarkable development of our knowledge on fibrinolysis is the theme in this Special Issue of the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*.





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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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