Chapter 7
Overview: Life at the Edge

• The plasma membrane is the boundary that separates the living cell from its surroundings.

• The plasma membrane exhibits **selective permeability**, allowing some substances to cross it more easily than others.
Concept 7.1: Cellular membranes are fluid mosaics of lipids and proteins

- Phospholipids are the most abundant lipid in the plasma membrane.
- Phospholipids are amphipathic molecules, containing hydrophobic and hydrophilic regions.
- The fluid mosaic model states that a membrane is a fluid structure with a “mosaic” of various proteins embedded in it.
Membrane Models: *Scientific Inquiry*

- Membranes have been chemically analyzed and found to be made of proteins and lipids
- Scientists studying the plasma membrane reasoned that it must be a phospholipid bilayer
• In 1935, Hugh Davson and James Danielli proposed a sandwich model in which the phospholipid bilayer lies between two layers of globular proteins.

• Later studies found problems with this model, particularly the placement of membrane proteins, which have hydrophilic and hydrophobic regions.

• In 1972, S. J. Singer and G. Nicolson proposed that the membrane is a mosaic of proteins dispersed within the bilayer, with only the hydrophilic regions exposed to water.
Figure 7.3

Phospholipid bilayer

Hydrophobic regions of protein

Hydrophilic regions of protein
• Freeze-fracture studies of the plasma membrane supported the fluid mosaic model
• Freeze-fracture is a specialized preparation technique that splits a membrane along the middle of the phospholipid bilayer
Figure 7.4

TECHNIQUE

- Knife
- Extracellular layer
- Proteins
- Cytoplasmic layer
- Plasma membrane

RESULTS

- Inside of extracellular layer
- Inside of cytoplasmic layer

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Figure 7.4a

Inside of extracellular layer

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Inside of cytoplasmic layer

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The Fluidity of Membranes

- Phospholipids in the plasma membrane can move within the bilayer
- Most of the lipids, and some proteins, drift laterally
- Rarely does a molecule flip-flop transversely across the membrane
Figure 7.5

- Glycoprotein
- Carbohydrate
- Glycolipid
- Microfilaments of cytoskeleton
- Cholesterol
- Fibers of extracellular matrix (ECM)
- Peripheral proteins
- Integral protein
- Extracellular side of membrane
- Cytoplasmic side of membrane
- Extracellular matrix (ECM)
Lateral movement occurs $\sim10^7$ times per second. Flip-flopping across the membrane is rare ($\sim$ once per month).
RESULTS

Mouse cell + Human cell → Hybrid cell → Mixed proteins after 1 hour
• As temperatures cool, membranes switch from a fluid state to a solid state
• The temperature at which a membrane solidifies depends on the types of lipids
• Membranes rich in unsaturated fatty acids are more fluid than those rich in saturated fatty acids
• Membranes must be fluid to work properly; they are usually about as fluid as salad oil
• The steroid cholesterol has different effects on membrane fluidity at different temperatures
• At warm temperatures (such as 37°C), cholesterol restrains movement of phospholipids
• At cool temperatures, it maintains fluidity by preventing tight packing
(a) Unsaturated versus saturated hydrocarbon tails

(b) Cholesterol within the animal cell membrane
Evolution of Differences in Membrane Lipid Composition

- Variations in lipid composition of cell membranes of many species appear to be adaptations to specific environmental conditions
- Ability to change the lipid compositions in response to temperature changes has evolved in organisms that live where temperatures vary
Membrane Proteins and Their Functions

• A membrane is a collage of different proteins, often grouped together, embedded in the fluid matrix of the lipid bilayer
• Proteins determine most of the membrane’s specific functions
• Peripheral proteins are bound to the surface of the membrane

• Integral proteins penetrate the hydrophobic core

• Integral proteins that span the membrane are called transmembrane proteins

• The hydrophobic regions of an integral protein consist of one or more stretches of nonpolar amino acids, often coiled into alpha helices
Figure 7.9

N-terminus

α helix

C-terminus

EXTRACELLULAR SIDE

CYTOPLASMIC SIDE
Six major functions of membrane proteins

- Transport
- Enzymatic activity
- Signal transduction
- Cell-cell recognition
- Intercellular joining
- Attachment to the cytoskeleton and extracellular matrix (ECM)
Figure 7.10

(a) Transport

(b) Enzymatic activity

(c) Signal transduction

(d) Cell-cell recognition

(e) Intercellular joining

(f) Attachment to the cytoskeleton and extracellular matrix (ECM)
(a) Transport  
(b) Enzymatic activity  
(c) Signal transduction
Figure 7.10b

(d) Cell-cell recognition

(e) Intercellular joining

(f) Attachment to the cytoskeleton and extracellular matrix (ECM)

Glycoprotein
The Role of Membrane Carbohydrates in Cell-Cell Recognition

• Cells recognize each other by binding to surface molecules, often containing carbohydrates, on the extracellular surface of the plasma membrane.

• Membrane carbohydrates may be covalently bonded to lipids (forming glycolipids) or more commonly to proteins (forming glycoproteins).

• Carbohydrates on the external side of the plasma membrane vary among species, individuals, and even cell types in an individual.
HIV can infect a cell that has CCR5 on its surface, as in most people.

HIV cannot infect a cell lacking CCR5 on its surface, as in resistant individuals.
Synthesis and Sidedness of Membranes

• Membranes have distinct inside and outside faces
• The asymmetrical distribution of proteins, lipids, and associated carbohydrates in the plasma membrane is determined when the membrane is built by the ER and Golgi apparatus
Concept 7.2: Membrane structure results in selective permeability

- A cell must exchange materials with its surroundings, a process controlled by the plasma membrane
- Plasma membranes are selectively permeable, regulating the cell’s molecular traffic
The Permeability of the Lipid Bilayer

• Hydrophobic (nonpolar) molecules, such as hydrocarbons, can dissolve in the lipid bilayer and pass through the membrane rapidly
• Polar molecules, such as sugars, do not cross the membrane easily
Transport Proteins

- **Transport proteins** allow passage of hydrophilic substances across the membrane.
- Some transport proteins, called channel proteins, have a hydrophilic channel that certain molecules or ions can use as a tunnel.
- Channel proteins called **aquaporins** facilitate the passage of water.
Other transport proteins, called carrier proteins, bind to molecules and change shape to shuttle them across the membrane.

A transport protein is specific for the substance it moves.
Concept 7.3: Passive transport is diffusion of a substance across a membrane with no energy investment

- **Diffusion** is the tendency for molecules to spread out evenly into the available space
- Although each molecule moves randomly, diffusion of a population of molecules may be directional
- At dynamic equilibrium, as many molecules cross the membrane in one direction as in the other
Figure 7.13

(a) Diffusion of one solute

(b) Diffusion of two solutes
Figure 7.13a

(a) Diffusion of one solute

Molecules of dye
Membrane (cross section)

Net diffusion
Equilibrium
Figure 7.13b

(b) Diffusion of two solutes
Substances diffuse down their concentration gradient, the region along which the density of a chemical substance increases or decreases.

No work must be done to move substances down the concentration gradient.

The diffusion of a substance across a biological membrane is **passive transport** because no energy is expended by the cell to make it happen.
Effects of Osmosis on Water Balance

- **Osmosis** is the diffusion of water across a selectively permeable membrane.
- Water diffuses across a membrane from the region of lower solute concentration to the region of higher solute concentration until the solute concentration is equal on both sides.
Figure 7.14

Lower concentration of solute (sugar)

Higher concentration of solute

Same concentration of solute

Sugar molecule

H$_2$O

Selectively permeable membrane

Osmosis

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Water Balance of Cells Without Walls

- **Tonicity** is the ability of a surrounding solution to cause a cell to gain or lose water.

- **Isotonic** solution: Solute concentration is the same as that inside the cell; no net water movement across the plasma membrane.

- **Hypertonic** solution: Solute concentration is greater than that inside the cell; cell loses water.

- **Hypotonic** solution: Solute concentration is less than that inside the cell; cell gains water.
Figure 7.15

(a) Animal cell

Hypotonic solution

H2O

Lysed

Isotonic solution

H2O → H2O

Normal

Hypertonic solution

H2O

Shriveled

(b) Plant cell

H2O

Cell wall

Turgid (normal)

H2O

Flaccid

H2O

Plasmolyzed
• Hypertonic or hypotonic environments create osmotic problems for organisms
• **Osmoregulation**, the control of solute concentrations and water balance, is a necessary adaptation for life in such environments
• The protist *Paramecium*, which is hypertonic to its pond water environment, has a contractile vacuole that acts as a pump
Video: *Paramecium* Vacuole
Figure 7.16

Contractile vacuole

50 µm
Water Balance of Cells with Walls

- Cell walls help maintain water balance
- A plant cell in a hypotonic solution swells until the wall opposes uptake; the cell is now **turgid** (firm)
- If a plant cell and its surroundings are isotonic, there is no net movement of water into the cell; the cell becomes **flaccid** (limp), and the plant may wilt
• In a hypertonic environment, plant cells lose water; eventually, the membrane pulls away from the wall, a usually lethal effect called **plasmolysis**
Video: Turgid *Elodea*
Animation: Osmosis
Right-click slide / select “Play”
Facilitated Diffusion: Passive Transport Aided by Proteins

- In **facilitated diffusion**, transport proteins speed the passive movement of molecules across the plasma membrane.
- Channel proteins provide corridors that allow a specific molecule or ion to cross the membrane.
- Channel proteins include:
  - Aquaporins, for facilitated diffusion of water.
  - **Ion channels** that open or close in response to a stimulus (**gated channels**).
Figure 7.17

(a) A channel protein

Channel protein

Solute

(b) A carrier protein

Carrier protein

Solute

EXTRACELLULAR FLUID

CYTOPLASM
• Carrier proteins undergo a subtle change in shape that translocates the solute-binding site across the membrane
Some diseases are caused by malfunctions in specific transport systems, for example the kidney disease cystinuria.
Concept 7.4: Active transport uses energy to move solutes against their gradients

- Facilitated diffusion is still passive because the solute moves down its concentration gradient, and the transport requires no energy
- Some transport proteins, however, can move solutes against their concentration gradients
The Need for Energy in Active Transport

- Active transport moves substances against their concentration gradients.
- Active transport requires energy, usually in the form of ATP.
- Active transport is performed by specific proteins embedded in the membranes.
Animation: Active Transport

Right-click slide / select “Play”
• Active transport allows cells to maintain concentration gradients that differ from their surroundings
• The **sodium-potassium pump** is one type of active transport system
Figure 7.18-1

Extracellular fluid: [Na\(^+\)] high, [K\(^+\)] low

Cytoplasm: [Na\(^+\)] low, [K\(^+\)] high
Figure 7.18-2

**EXTRACELLULAR FLUID**

- \([\text{Na}^+]\) high
- \([\text{K}^+]\) low

**CYTOPLASM**

1. \([\text{Na}^+]\) low
2. \([\text{K}^+]\) high

\[\text{Na}^+ \rightarrow \text{ATP} \rightarrow \text{ADP}\]
Figure 7.18-3

**EXTRACELLULAR FLUID**
- [Na⁺] high
- [K⁺] low

**CYTOPLASM**
- [Na⁺] low
- [K⁺] high

1. **Step 1**
   - Na⁺

2. **Step 2**
   - Na⁺
   - ATP
   - ADP

3. **Step 3**
   - Na⁺
Figure 7.18-4

EXTRACELLULAR FLUID

[Na⁺] high
[Na⁺] low

[K⁺] low
[K⁺] high

CYTOPLASM

Na⁺ low
Na⁺ high

1

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

2

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

Na⁺

3

ATP

ADP

4

K⁺

K⁺

P

P

P
Figure 7.18-5

EXTRACELLULAR FLUID [Na\(^+\)] high [K\(^+\)] low

CYTOPLASM [Na\(^+\)] low [K\(^+\)] high

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5.
Figure 7.18-6

EXTRACELLULAR FLUID

[Na⁺] high
[K⁺] low

CYTOPLASM

[Na⁺] low
[K⁺] high

1 2 3 4 5 6

Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺

Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺ Na⁺

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How Ion Pumps Maintain Membrane Potential

- **Membrane potential** is the voltage difference across a membrane.
- Voltage is created by differences in the distribution of positive and negative ions across a membrane.
• Two combined forces, collectively called the **electrochemical gradient**, drive the diffusion of ions across a membrane
  – A chemical force (the ion’s concentration gradient)
  – An electrical force (the effect of the membrane potential on the ion’s movement)
• An **electrogenic pump** is a transport protein that generates voltage across a membrane.
• The sodium-potassium pump is the major electrogenic pump of animal cells.
• The main electrogenic pump of plants, fungi, and bacteria is a **proton pump**.
• Electrogenic pumps help store energy that can be used for cellular work.
Figure 7.20

The diagram illustrates the proton pump mechanism in the cytoplasm and extracellular fluid. ATP is used to power the proton pump, which actively transports protons (H+) across the cell membrane from the cytoplasm to the extracellular fluid. This process results in a concentration gradient, with more protons in the extracellular fluid compared to the cytoplasm, facilitating various cellular functions such as pH regulation and energy generation.

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Cotransport: Coupled Transport by a Membrane Protein

• **Cotransport** occurs when active transport of a solute indirectly drives transport of other solutes

• Plants commonly use the gradient of hydrogen ions generated by proton pumps to drive active transport of nutrients into the cell
ATP

Proton pump

Sucrose-H⁺ cotransporter

Diffusion of H⁺

Sucrose

Sucrose

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Concept 7.5: Bulk transport across the plasma membrane occurs by exocytosis and endocytosis

- Small molecules and water enter or leave the cell through the lipid bilayer or via transport proteins.
- Large molecules, such as polysaccharides and proteins, cross the membrane in bulk via vesicles.
- Bulk transport requires energy.
Exocytosis

• In **exocytosis**, transport vesicles migrate to the membrane, fuse with it, and release their contents

• Many secretory cells use exocytosis to export their products
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Animation: Exocytosis
Right-click slide / select “Play”
Endocytosis

- In **endocytosis**, the cell takes in macromolecules by forming vesicles from the plasma membrane.
- Endocytosis is a reversal of exocytosis, involving different proteins.
- There are three types of endocytosis:
  - Phagocytosis (“cellular eating”)
  - Pinocytosis (“cellular drinking”)
  - Receptor-mediated endocytosis
Animation: Exocytosis and Endocytosis Introduction

Right-click slide / select “Play”
• In **phagocytosis** a cell engulfs a particle in a vacuole
• The vacuole fuses with a lysosome to digest the particle
• In **pinocytosis**, molecules are taken up when extracellular fluid is “gulped” into tiny vesicles.
• In **receptor-mediated endocytosis**, binding of ligands to receptors triggers vesicle formation

• A **ligand** is any molecule that binds specifically to a receptor site of another molecule
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Animation: Receptor-Mediated Endocytosis

Right-click slide / select “Play”
Figure 7.22

Phagocytosis

EXTRACELLULAR FLUID

Solutes

Pseudopodium

“Food” or other particle

Food vacuole

CYTOPLASM

Pinocytosis

Plasma membrane

Vesicle

Receptor-Mediated Endocytosis

Ligand

Coat proteins

Coated pit

Coated vesicle

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An amoeba engulfing a bacterium via phagocytosis (TEM).
Pinocytosis vesicles forming in a cell lining a small blood vessel (TEM).
Receptor-Mediated Endocytosis

An amoeba engulfing a bacterium via phagocytosis (TEM).
Figure 7.22e

Pinocytosis vesicles forming (indicated by arrows) in a cell lining a small blood vessel (TEM).

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Figure 7.22f

*Top:* A coated pit. *Bottom:* A coated vesicle forming during receptor-mediated endocytosis (TEMs).

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Passive transport: Facilitated diffusion

Channel protein

Carrier protein
Active transport
“Cell”
0.03 $M$ sucrose
0.02 $M$ glucose

“Environment”
0.01 $M$ sucrose
0.01 $M$ glucose
0.01 $M$ fructose
Figure 7.UN04

Hydrophilic portion

Hydrophobic portion

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