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Author(s): Matthew Velkey, 2009

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Lymphatic Histology

M1 – Immunology Sequence J. Matthew Velkey, Ph.D.



Winter 2009

Learning Objectives

Text: Ross, 5th ed., pp. 396-441 Atlas: Wheater's, 5th ed., pp. 215-233

- 1. Understand the distinction between PRIMARY and SECONDARY lymphoid organs
- 2. Be able to describe the <u>organization</u> and <u>function</u> of:
 - Mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue
 - <u>Diffuse</u> and <u>nodular</u> lymphoid tissue, also including regions of extensive lymphoid infiltration such as Peyer's patches, appendix, and <u>tonsils</u>.
 - <u>lymph nodes</u>
 - <u>Spleen</u>
 - <u>Thymus</u>
- 3. Be able to identify the regions rich in B and T lymphocytes in each organ and explain the cellular processes, relevant to immune functions, that are taking place in these regions.
- 4. Know the homing patterns of B & T lymphocytes.

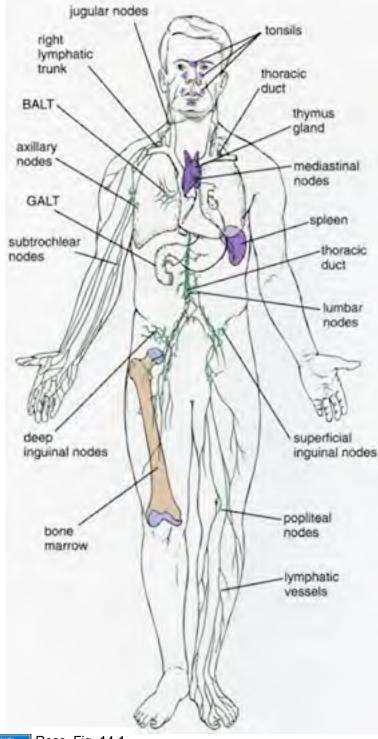
Functions of the Lymphatic System

- 1. Monitor body surfaces and fluid compartments (e.g. epidermis, mucosae*, interstitium)
- 2. React to the presence of potentially harmful antigens recognized as "non-self"
- 3. Autoimmune diseases (rheumatoid arthritis, type I diabetes, etc.)
- Lymphatic System consists of:

A. Cells

- 1. Lymphocytes (B,T, natural killer)
- 2. Antigen-presenting cells (dendritic cells, Langerhans' cells & macrophages)
- B. Lymphatic "tissue" –diffuse and nodular
- C. Lymphatic "organs" (lymph nodes, spleen, thymus)
- D. Lymphatic vessels that carry the cells and fluid

*Mucosae refers to lining tissue of the body cavities, e.g. GI tract, respiratory tract, genitourinary tract



Lymphoid organs are classified as:

Primary lymphoid organs

- Thymus
- Bone marrow
- Lymphatic nodules of the distal intestinal tract (e.g. ileum and appendix)

Secondary (effector) lymphoid organs/tissue

- Spleen & lymph nodes (organs)
- <u>Mucosal associated lymphoid tissue</u> (MALT), e.g. lymphocytes and lymphatic nodules in the lamina propria

Primary Lymphoid Organs:

The bone marrow and the thymus and the Gut-Associated Lymphoid Tissue (e.g. <u>appendix</u>, <u>terminal ileum</u>) are the initial "education centers" of the immune system

In these organs, lymphocytes (T cells in the thymus, B cells in bone marrow and gut) differentiate into **immunocompetent** cells (i.e. they can recognize "self" vs. "nonself")

This differentiation is said to be antigen-*independent*

The lymphocytes then enter the blood and lymph to populate:

- epidermis and mucosae
- connective tissue
- secondary lymphoid organs

Secondary Lymphoid Organs:

The lymph nodes, lymphatic nodules, tonsils, spleen are the secondary "education centers" of the immune system

In these organs, immunocompetent lymphocytes differentiate into immune effector and memory cells that undergo antigendependent activation and proliferation in these organs.

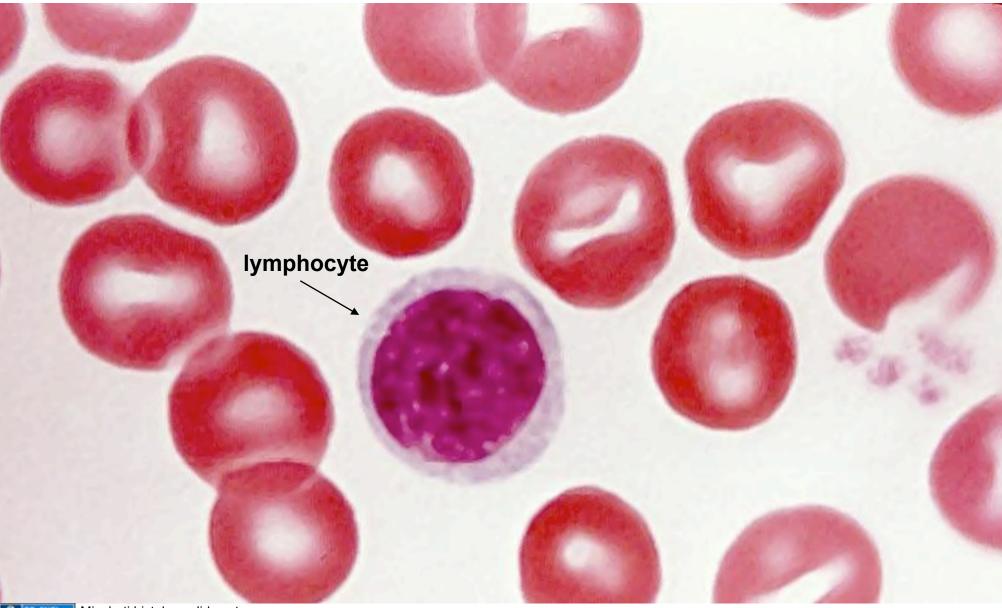
These lymphocytes then carry out their functions in the:

- connective tissue
- secondary lymphoid organs
- mucosal surfaces lining epithelia

They participate in:

- Cell mediated immunity (mostly "cytotoxic" T cells)
- Humoral responses (production of antibody) (B cells, also requires "helper" T cells.

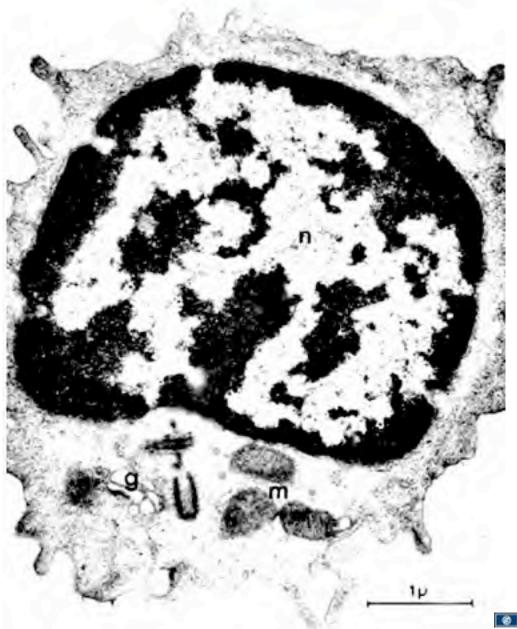
Lymphocytes in peripheral blood smear



Mizobuti histology slide set

These are B and T-cells that have undergone antigen-INDEPENDENT differentiation and are trafficking through the bloodstream on their way to lymphoid organs/tissue.

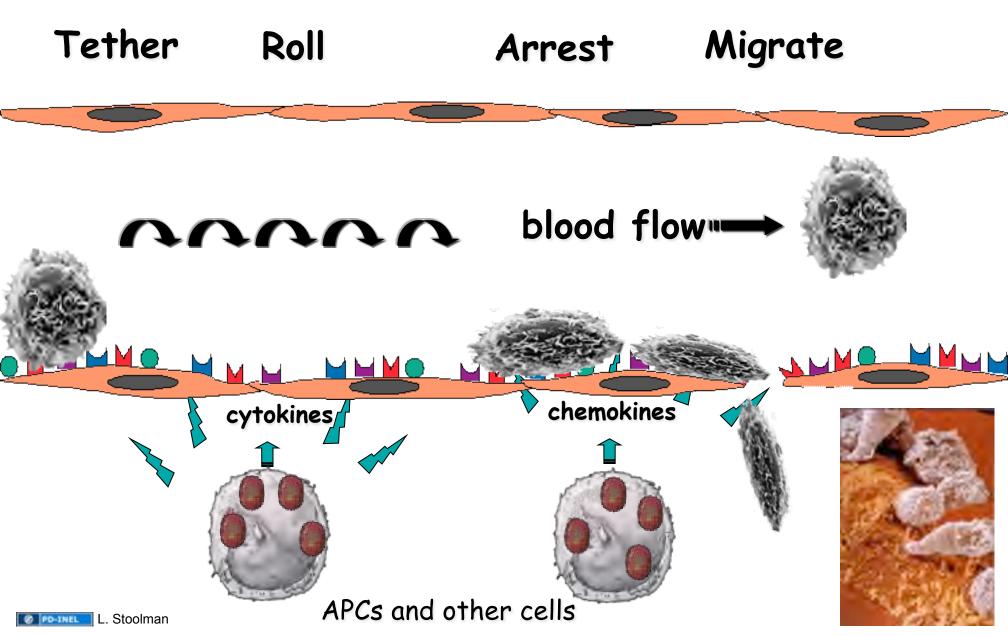
Resting Lymphocyte



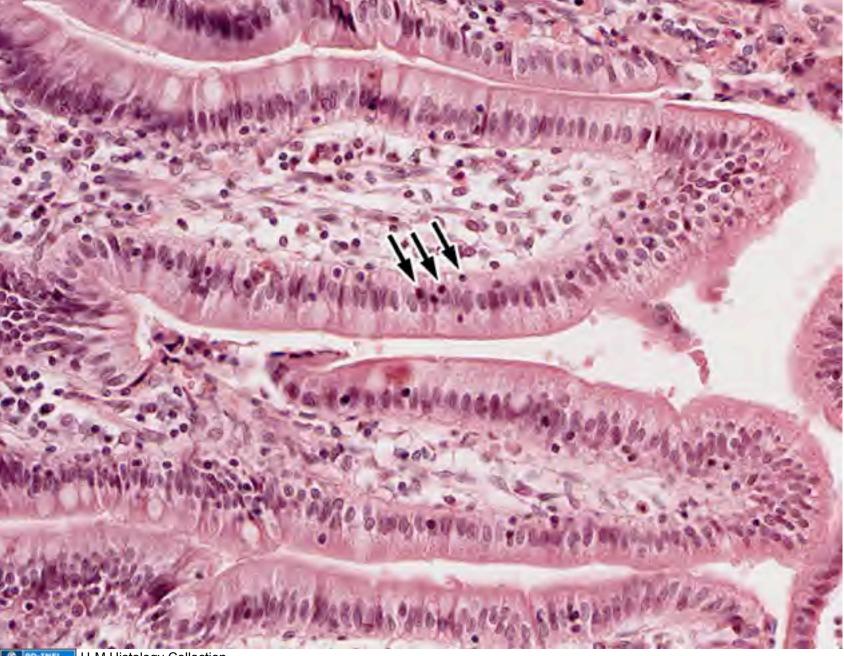
Source Undetermined

Diapedesis: it's not just for the Normans and the Saxons...

Cytokines and chemokines (along with selectins and integrins) mediate EXTRAvasation of lymphocytes into tissues.



MALT: intraepithelial lymphocytes: $\gamma \delta T$ -cells (neither helper nor cytotoxic): first to see antigens



Intraepithelial lymphocytes

IEI

IEL

IEL

Shown here in resp. epith.

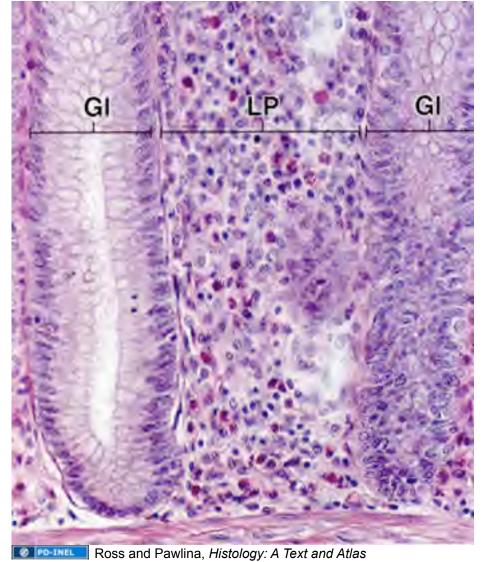
Homing mediated by "addressins" (a sort of lymphocyte "GPS") basement membrane

basement membrane

IEL

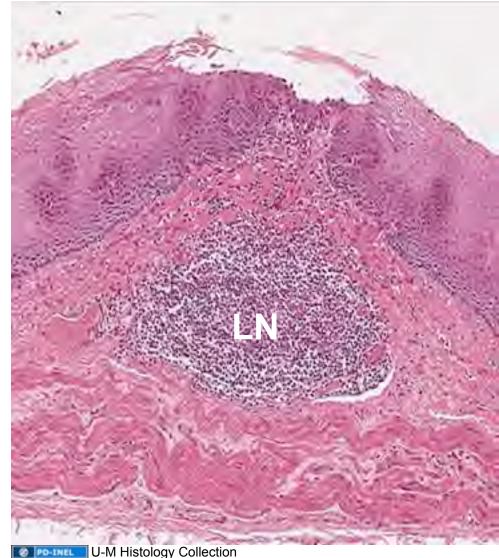
IEL

LYMPHOCYTES IN CONNECTIVE TISSUE: MALT = mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue



Diffuse lymphoid tissue

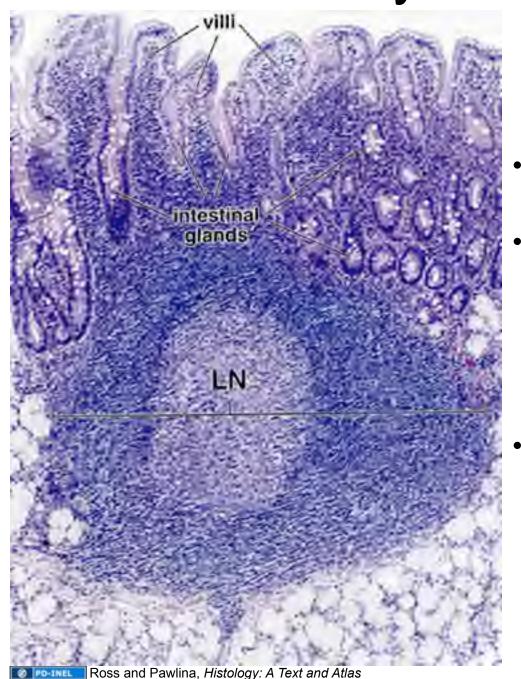
Lamina propria (LP) of gut shown here, but can be found associated with mucosae anywhere in the gut, respiratory, and genitourinary tracts.



Primary lymphatic nodule/follicle (LN)

Aggregation of lymphocytes in lamina propria or submucosa

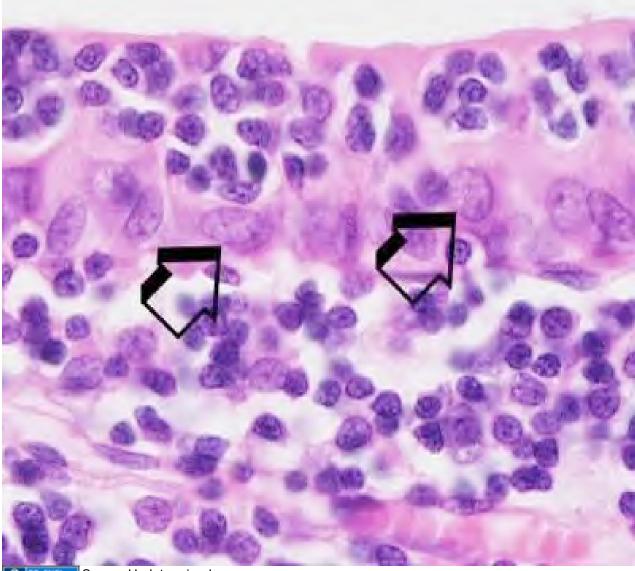
Secondary follicles/nodules



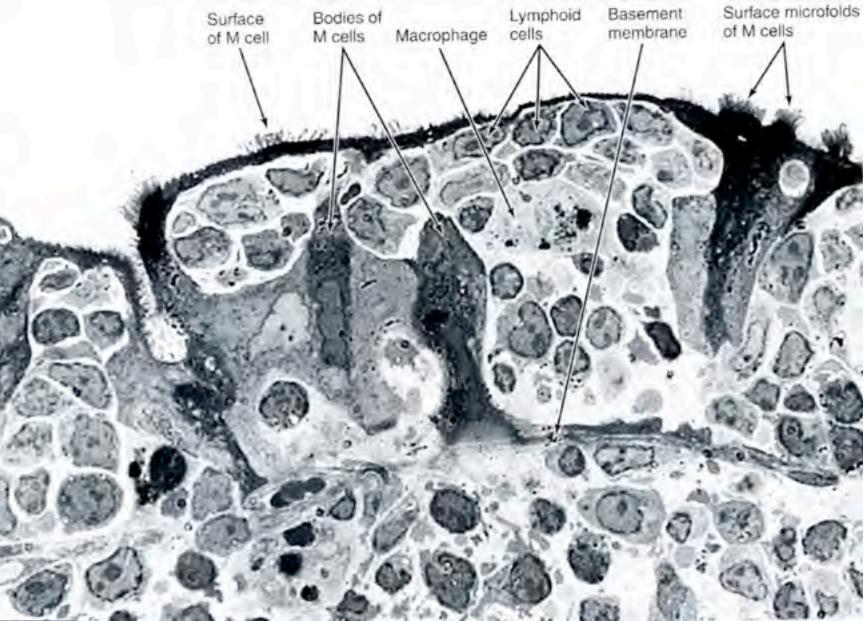
- Contain germinal centers
- Arise when B-lymphocytes are presented with appropriate antigen, receive T-cell help, and then begin proliferating as <u>lymphoblasts</u>
- Lymphoblasts differentiate into <u>plasma cells</u> or <u>memory cells</u>; aberrant lymphoblasts undergo apoptosis.

Microfold, or "M" CELLS

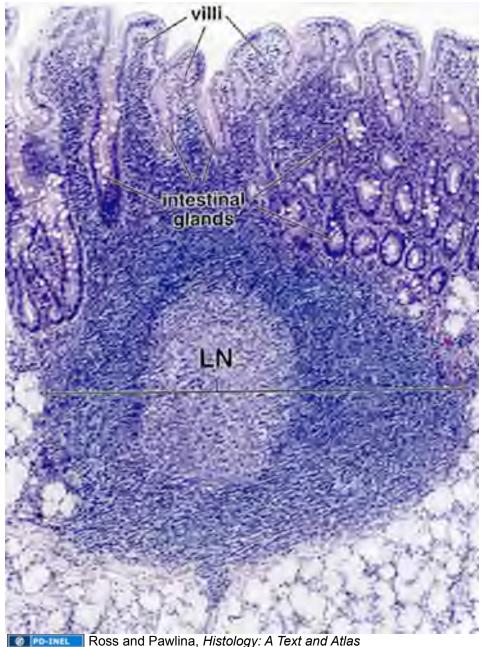
Modified intestinal epithelial cells that assist in antigen presentation by conveying macromolecules from the intestinal lumen to underlying compartments housing lymphocytes and macrophages.



M cells: TEM



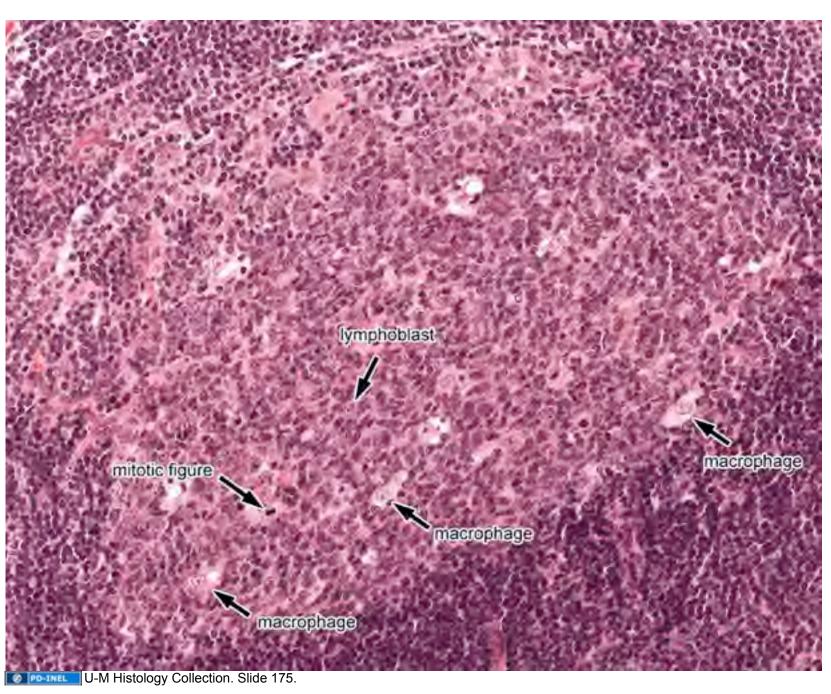
After antigen presentation and T-cell help, activated B-cells set up germinal centers in secondary follicles



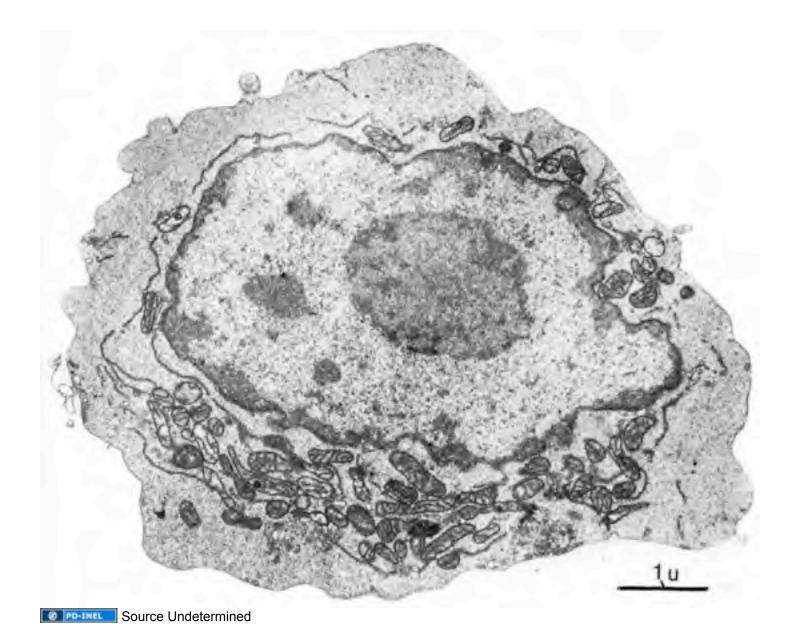
Secondary follicle germinal centers

- Arise when B-lymphocytes are presented with appropriate antigen, receive T-cell help, and then begin proliferating as <u>lymphoblasts</u>
- Lymphoblasts differentiate into <u>plasma cells</u> or <u>memory cells</u>; aberrant lymphoblasts undergo apoptosis.

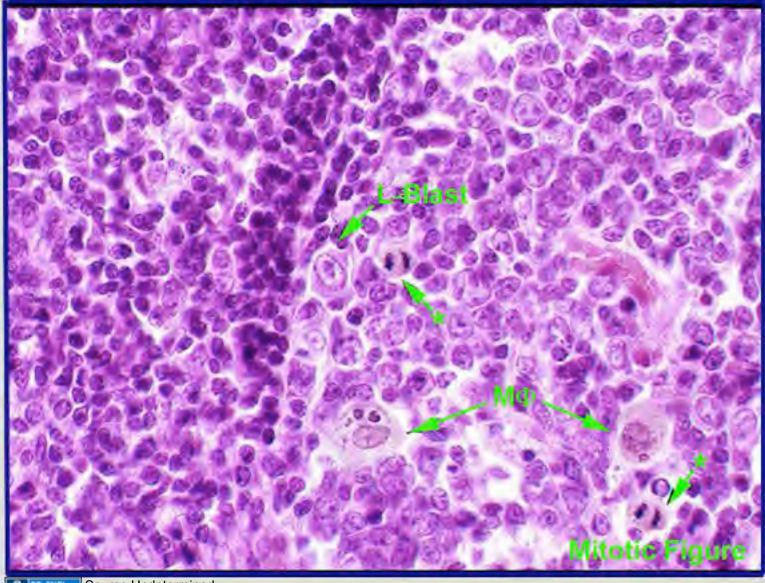
Germinal center: high magnification



Lymphoblast viewed by transmission electron microscopy

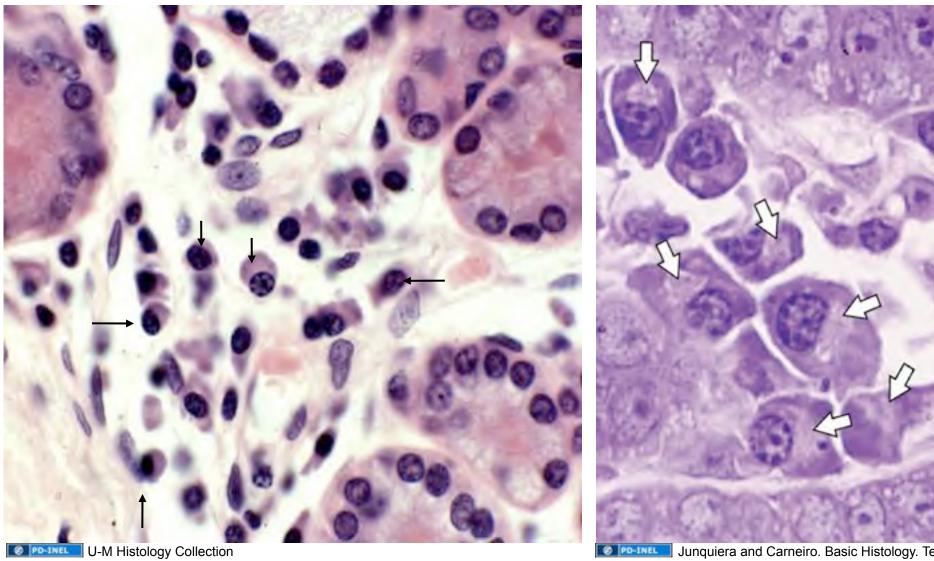


Germinal Center--Lymphoblasts and Macrophages



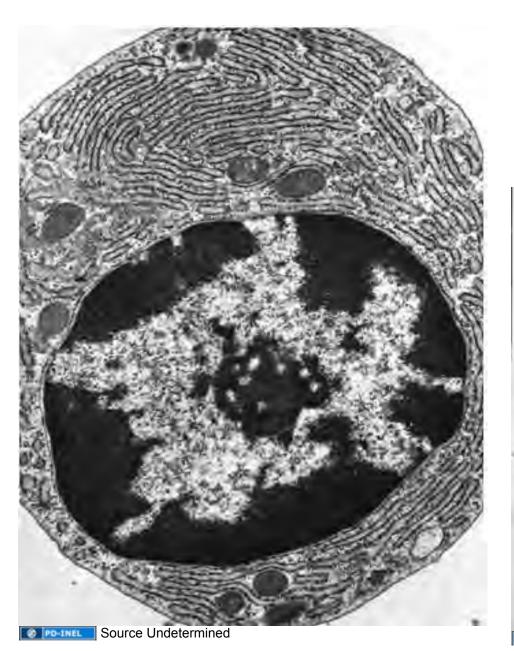
Source Undetermined

Plasma Cells are mature B lymphocytes

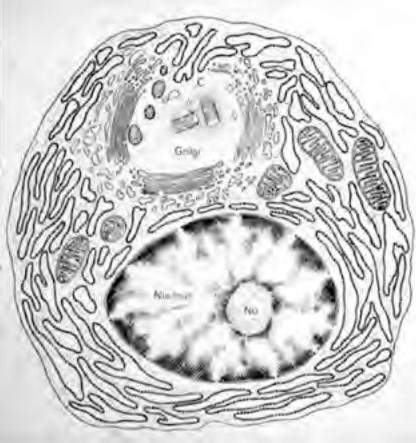


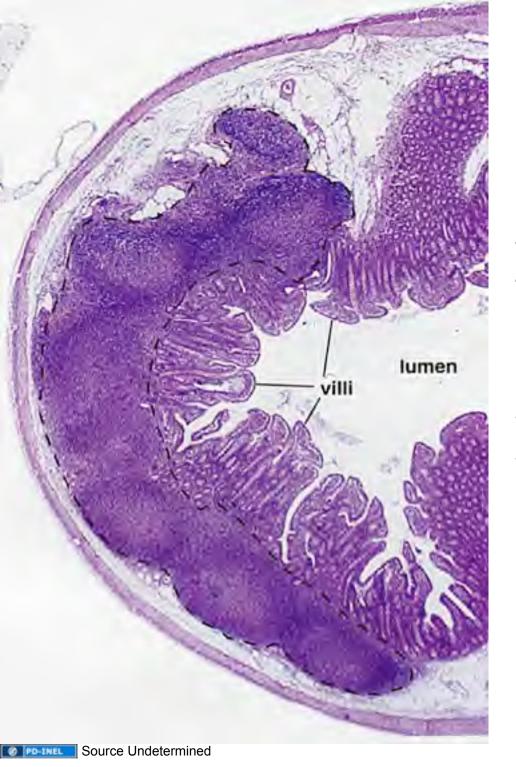
Black arrows indicate several plasma cells

Junquiera and Carneiro. Basic Histology. Tenth Ed. 2003 White arrows = Golgi regions



EM of Plasma Cells





So, associated with just about <u>any</u> mucosa (GI, respiratory, genitourinary), you may see:

- Intraepithelial lymphocytes (T-cells)
- Diffuse lymphoid tissue:
 - B-cells
 - T-cells
 - APCs
- Primary nodules
- Secondary nodules
 - Germinal center with
 lymphoblasts and mphages

Regions of extensive lymphoid infiltration: Peyer's patches

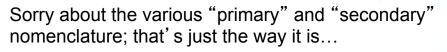


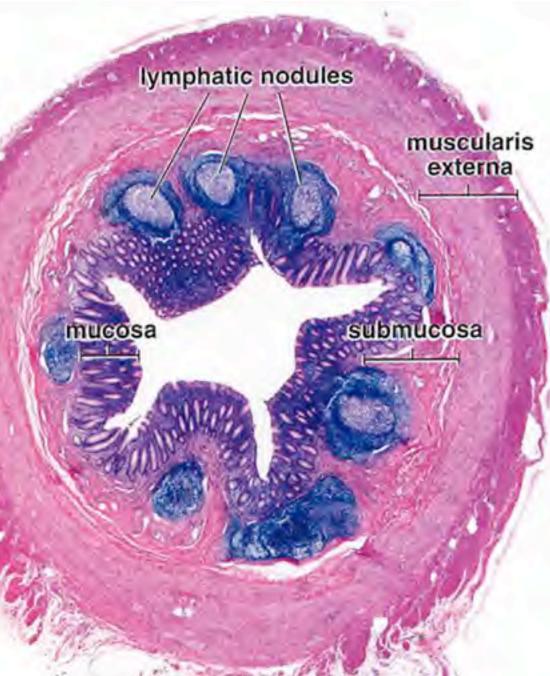
Aggregates of lymphoid follicles in the ileum.

Appendix

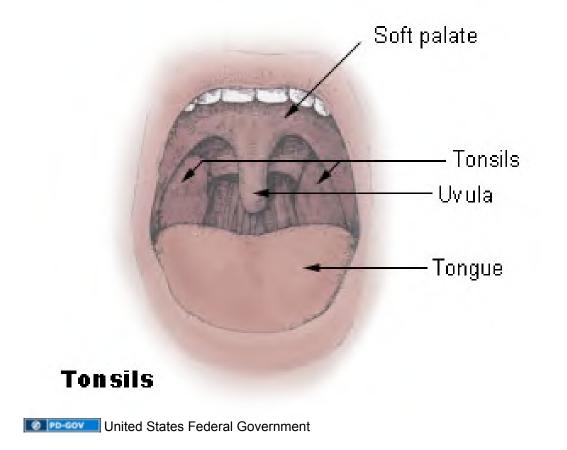
Blind sac extending from the caecum

- primary and secondary follicles in lamina propria and submucosa
- So, clearly a secondary lymphoid organ...
- However, also a site of antigen-INDEPENDENT differentiation (similar to Bursa of Fabriscus is birds)
- So, also a primary lymphoid organ

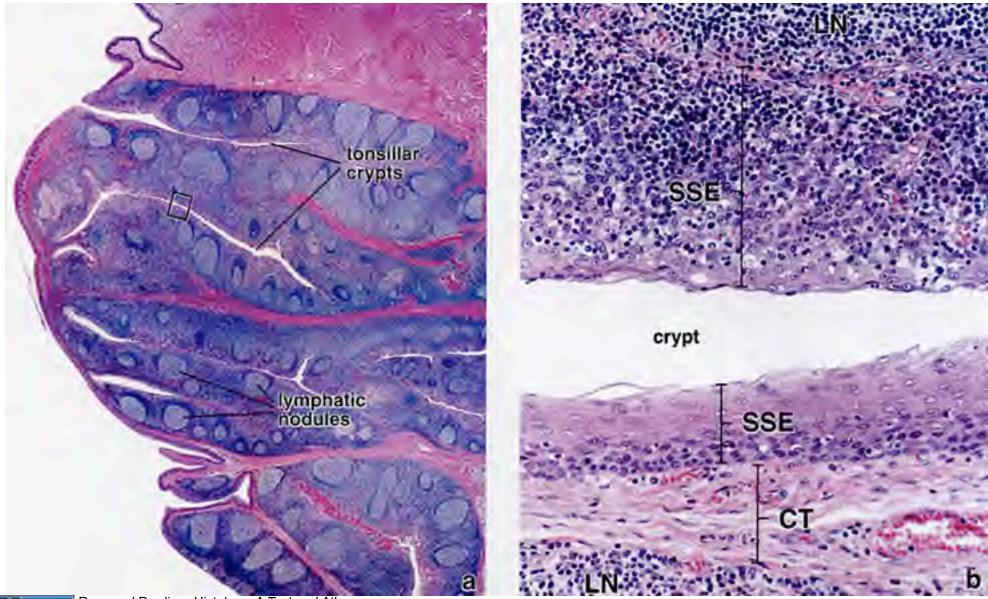




Tonsils: MALT of the oropharynx



TONSILS

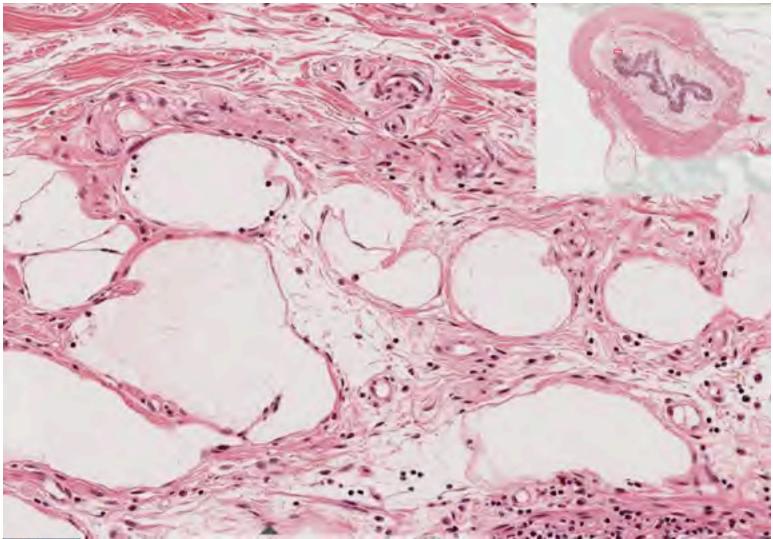


Ross and Pawlina, Histology: A Text and Atlas

The palatine tonsils are paired structures made of dense accumulations of lymphatic tissue located in the mucous membrane of the junction of the oropharynx and oral cavity. The tonsils dip down into the underlying CT, forming crypts. There are also lingual tonsils and pharyngeal tonsils (under the roof of the nasopharynx and around the opening of the Eustachian tubes). Key features: crypts, abundant nodules, stratified squamous epithelium

Wanderlust: lymphocytes don't just stay in one place

From the MALT, lymphocytes can squeeze into lymph vessels...

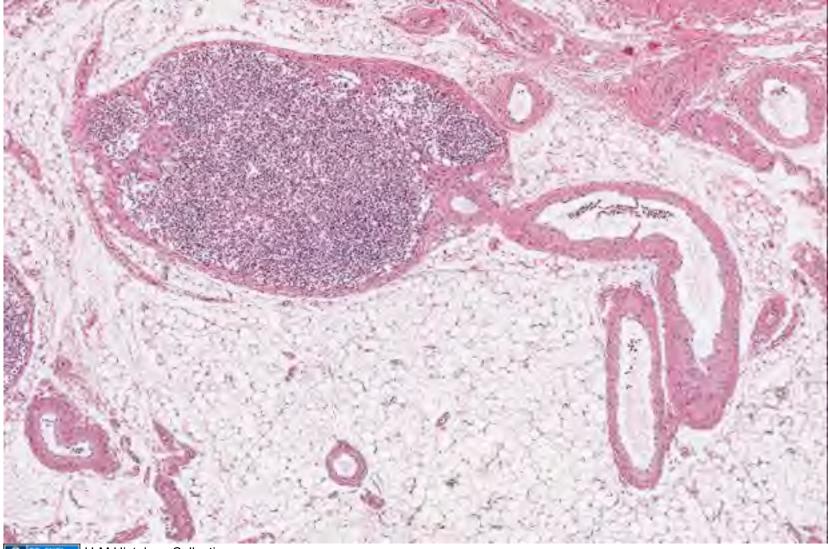


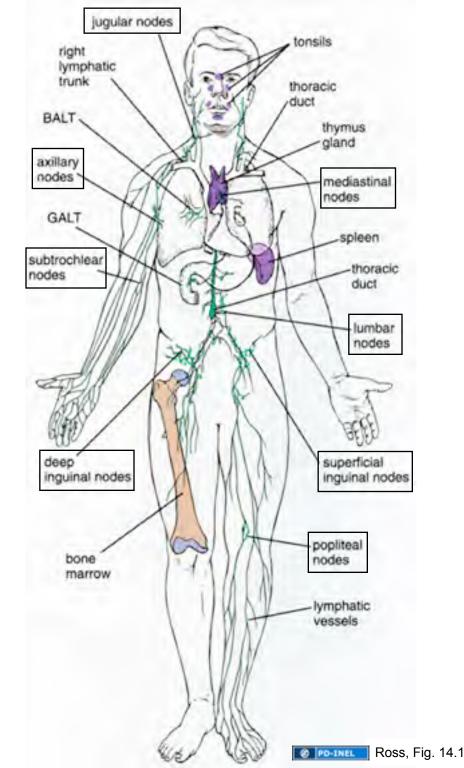


...go through larger lymphatic channels in the mesentery...

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..and end up at a LYMPH NODE.



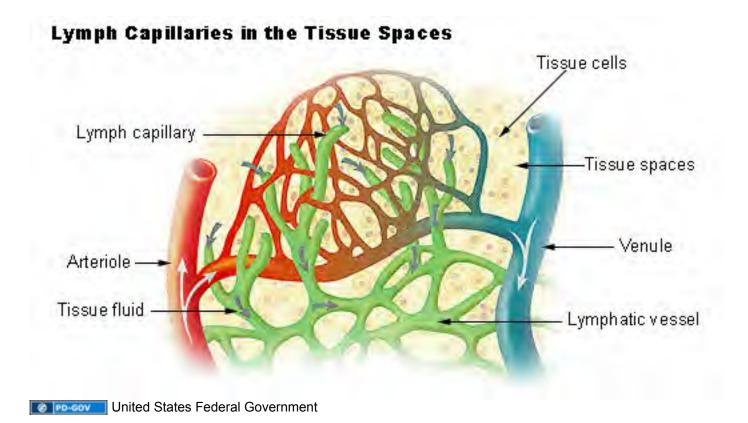


Lymph Nodes

Main functions:

- 1. Filter lymph, thereby promoting lymphocyte contact with antigen
- 2. Provides necessary microenvironment for antigen-dependent differentiation

Lymphoid circulation in the body takes place in both the blood stream and the **lymphatic vessels**, a separate vessel system that carries cells of the lymphoid system and their products (cytokines, antibodies, etc.).

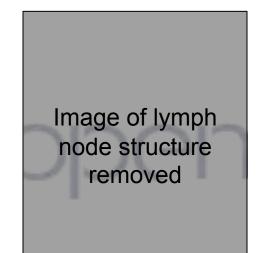


Lymphatic drainage: anatomy

Image of lymphatic drainage anatomy removed

Original Image: http://health-tune-ups.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/cdr533339-750.jpg

Lymph node structure



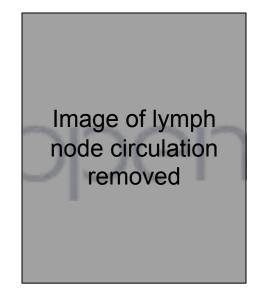
Original Image: http://academic.kellogg.cc.mi.us/ herbrandsonc/bio201_McKinley/ f24-10a_lymph_node_and__c.jpg



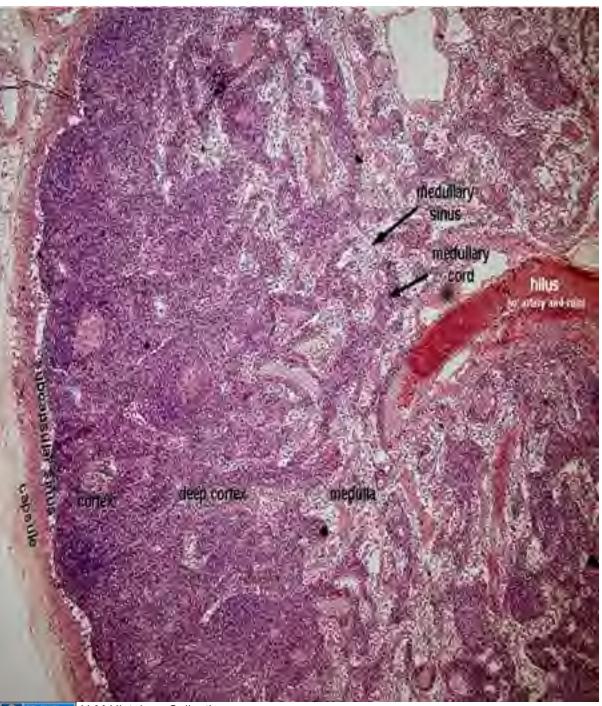
Lymphatic Circulation Through a Lymph Node

Lymph nodes filter lymph

- 1. Afferent lymphatic vessels drain lymph into the <u>Subcapsular</u> <u>Sinus</u>
- 2. Lymph then passes to the <u>Trabecular sinuses</u>
- 3. From there, the lymph goes to the <u>Medullary sinuses.</u>
- 4. Lymphocytes and macrophages pass easily between these sinuses and the tissue of the lymph node.
- Macrophages in sinuses monitor the fluids. Macs phagocytose the antigenic material and present it to T- and B-cells



Original Image: http://human.freescience.org/images/Illu_lymph_node_structure.png



Lymph Node Structure

 Capsule & subcapsular sinus
 Trabeculae & trabecular sinuses sinuses contain lymph, <u>macrophages</u>, and <u>reticular cells</u>

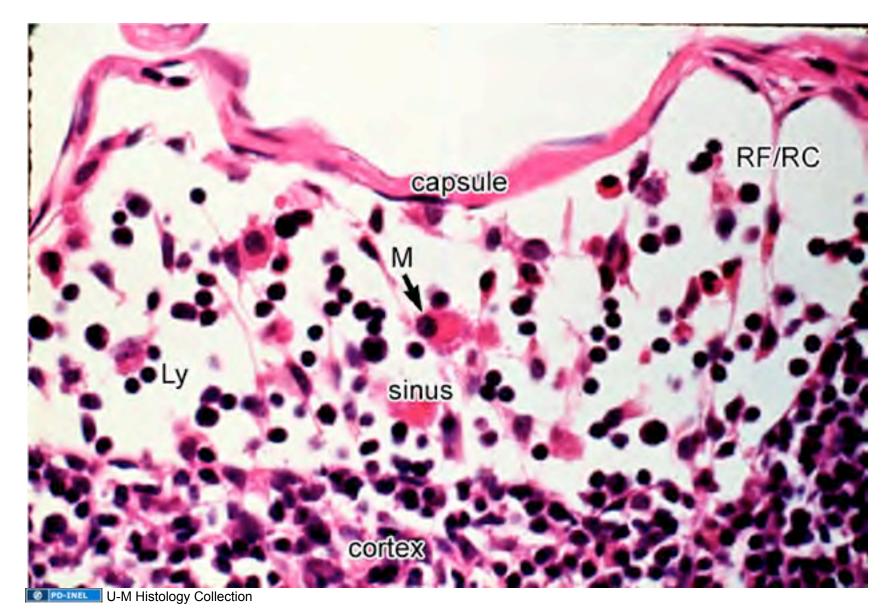
- Cortex:

- superficial cortex (B-cells) -primary follicles/nodules -secondary follicles/nodules (i.e. with germinal centers)
- "deep" cortex (T-cells, dendritic cells)

- Medulla:

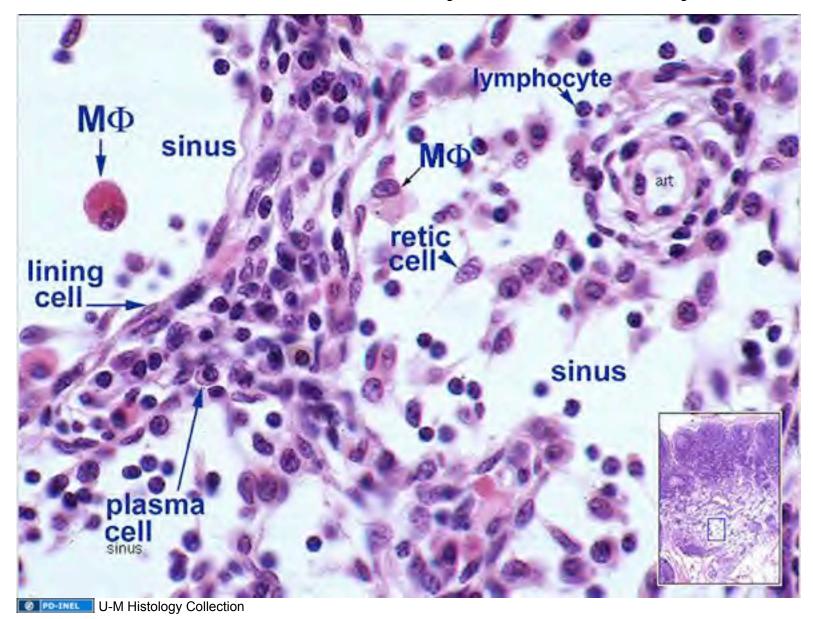
- medullary cords (B-cells, plasma cells)
- medullary sinuses (lymph, more macrophages, plasma cells, and reticular cells)

High magnification view of a sinus (subcapsular sinus shown here)

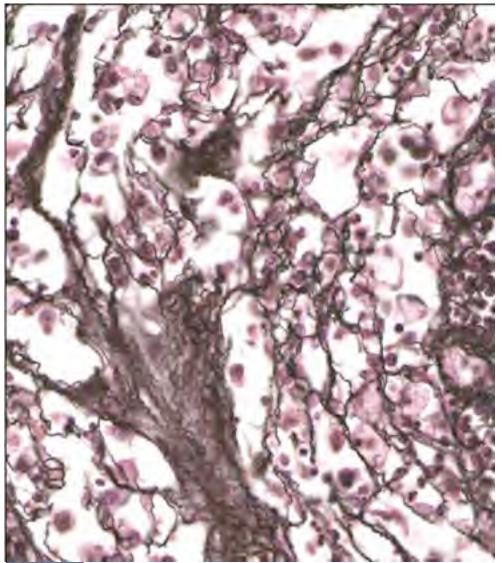


M=macrophage, Ly=lymphocytes, RF/RC=reticular fiber (and associated reticular cell)

From the sub-capsular sinus, lymph percolates through trabecular sinuses, and finally into medullary sinuses



Reticular (Reticulin) Fibers

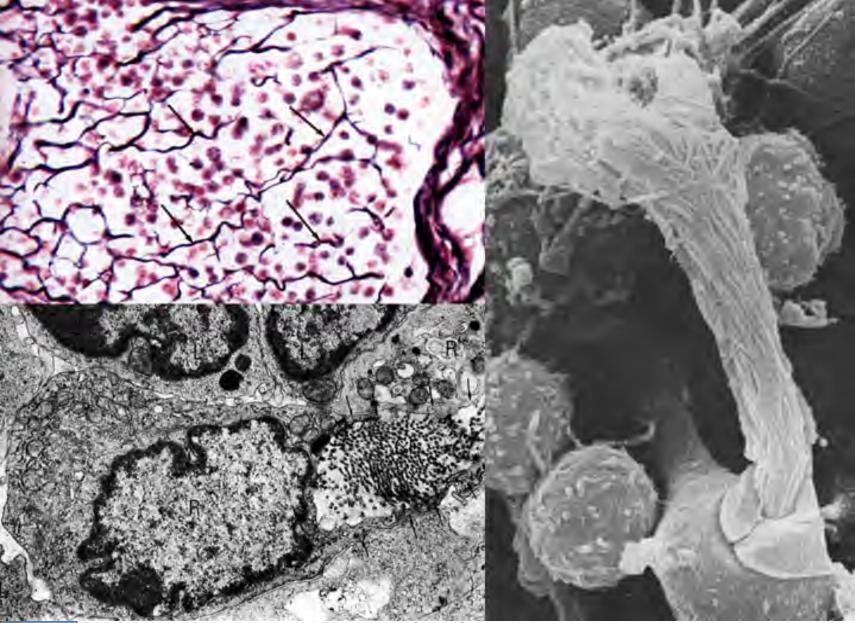


- Form a delicate supporting framework for highly cellular tissues (endocrine glands, lymph nodes, liver, bone marrow, spleen, smooth muscle).
- Composed mainly of Type III collagen, with a carbohydrate moiety that reduces Ag+ to metallic sliver = argyrophilic
- Special stain: silver impregnation to visualize.
- Thinner than type I collagen (Type III fibrils are 30-40 nm diameter; type I fibrils are ~200 nm diameter)

Source Undetermined

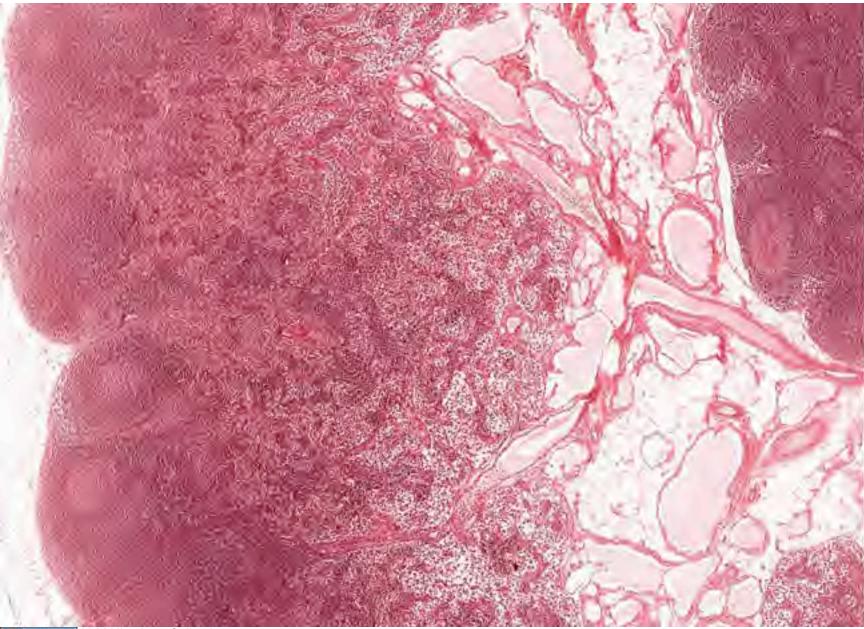
Reticular Fibers (type III collagen)

made by reticular cells (specialized fibroblasts)



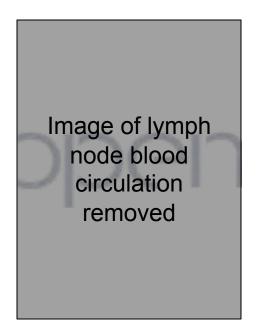
Top left: Ross and Pawlina, Histology: A Text and Atlas. Others: Sources Undetermined

Medullary sinuses drain into EFFERENT lymphatics that exit from the hilum of the lymph node



Blood Circulation Through a Lymph Node

- 1. Blood enters through an artery at the hilus
- 2. Arterioles branch from hilar artery to feed into capillary beds
- 3. Capillary beds are drained by high endothelial venules*
- 4. HEVs drain into hilar vein



Original Image: Ross, fig. 14.18

*HEVs are sites where lymphocytes can leave blood stream to enter the lymph node tissue bed.

Slide 27, lymph node, H&E, 10x obj.

medulla

deep cortex

high endothelial venules

cortex

capsule

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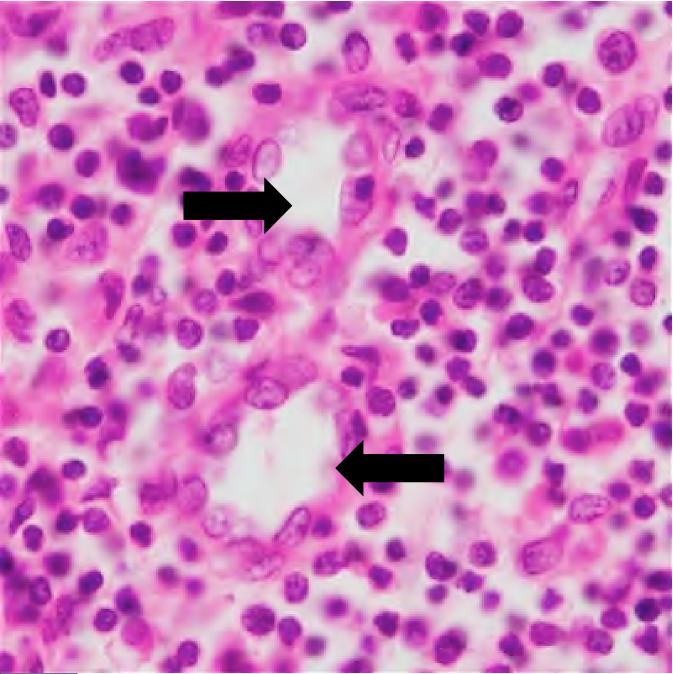
Slide 27, lymph node, H&E, 40x obj.

high endothelial venules

6 ale - 6

@ PO-INEL U-M Histology Collection

High Endothelial Venules

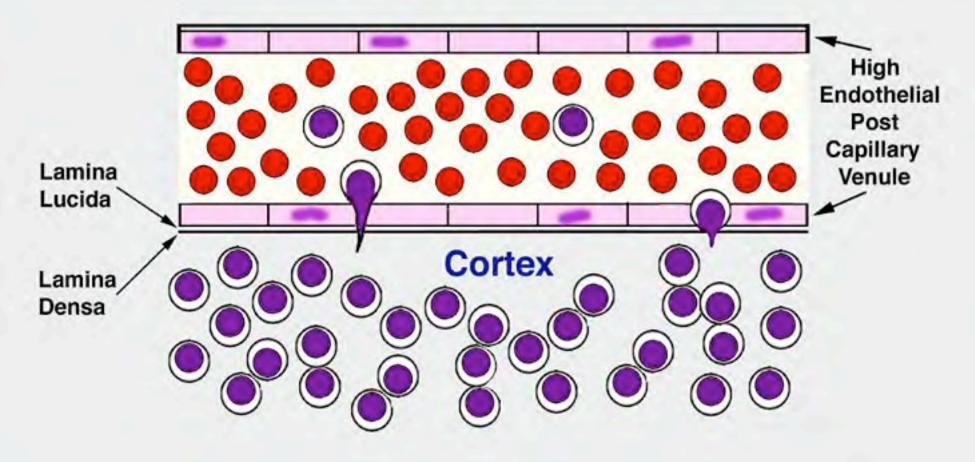


Site of:

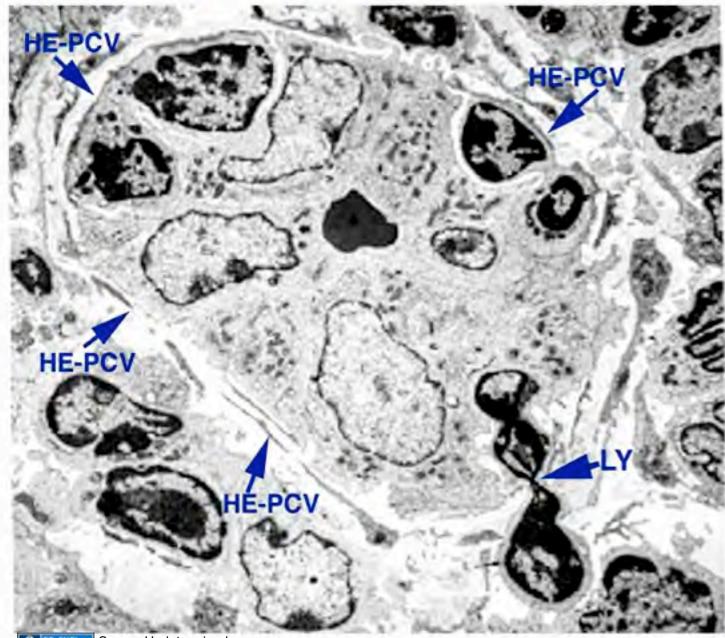
- Fluid absorption (via aquaporin-1 channels), which causes lymph flow
- EXIT of lymphocytes from bloodstream via diapedesis

Lymphocyte Homing -

Extravasation by T and B Cells in the High Endothelial Postcapillary Venules of the Lymph Node Cortex

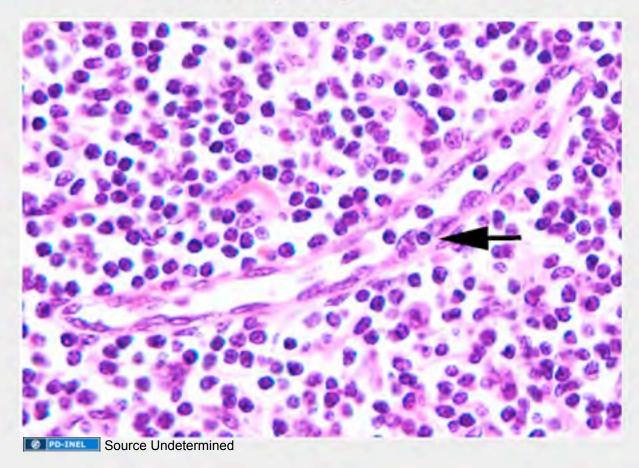


Lymphocyte Homing

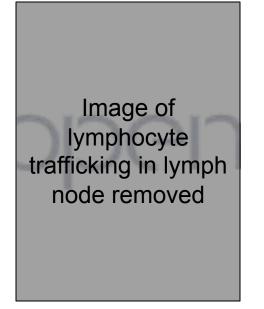


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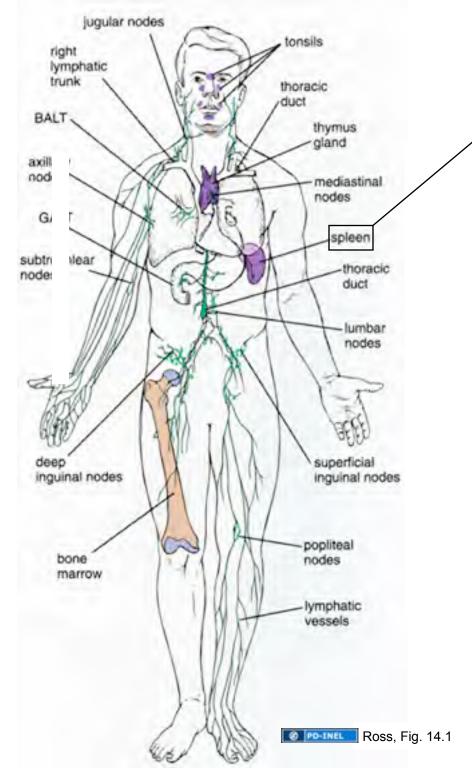
Lymphocyte Homing in the High Endothelial Postcapillary Venule



Summary of lymphocyte traffic in a lymph node



- Solvent drag caused by caused by HEV fluid transport draws lymph in via afferent vessels
 - ~10% of lymphocytes enter this way; mostly memory cells
- HEV endothelial cells express selectins and other receptors for antigen-primed lymphocytes that stimulate them to EXIT bloodstream via diapedesis
 - ~90% enter this way; mostly <u>naïve</u> <u>lymphocytes</u>
- T-cells move to deep cortex; B-cells migrate to superficial cortex; differentiated plasma cells move to medullary cords and secrete IgG into lymph
- Lymphocytes may leave lymph node via EFFERENT lymph vessels (can rejoin bloodstream via thoracic duct, jugular vein, etc.)



The Spleen

Filters the blood

Destroys old red blood cells

Serves as an immune organ

Divided into <u>**Red Pulp</u>** (RBC/ hemoglobin recycling) <u>White Pulp</u> (responsible for immune functions)</u>

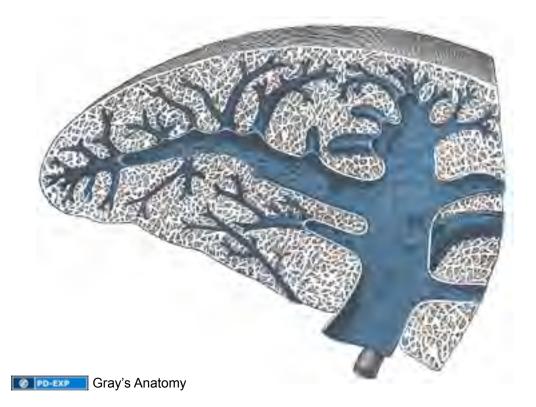
- Monitoring antigens in blood
- Proliferation of lymphocytes
- Production of humoral antibodies

Immune Functions Of the Spleen

Hematopoietic Functions Of the Spleen

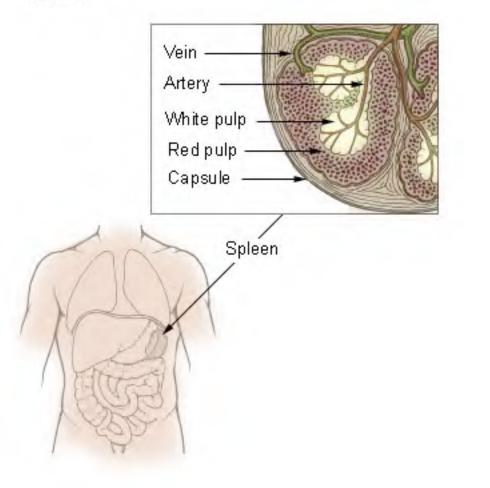
- Formation of blood cells in fetal life
- Removal and destruction of RBCs & platelets
- Retrieval of iron from RBC hemoglobin
- Storage of RBCs and platelets (more so in non-human species)

Spleen: anatomy



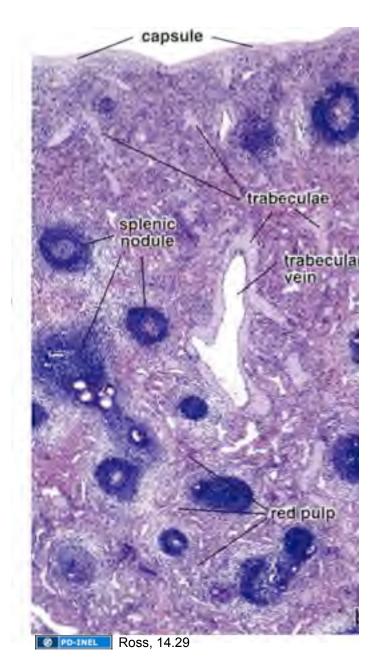
Spleen: anatomy

Spieen



Cancer.gov, Wikipedia, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Illu_spleen.jpg

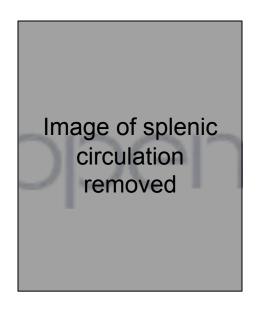
ORGANIZATION OF THE SPLEEN



Splenic Circulation

- 1. Blood enters via splenic artery at hilus
- 2. Splenic artery branches into <u>trabecular arteries</u> (which travel within connective tissue trabeculae).
- 3. Trabecular arteries give off branches known as <u>central</u> <u>arteries</u> which leave the trabecula and enter the substance of the spleen (covered by a peri-arterial lymphatic sheath).
- 4. Central arteries branch into <u>penicillar arterioles</u> that piece through the lymphatic sheath and spill into <u>splenic cords</u>.
- 5. Blood percolates through splenic cords and across walls of <u>splenic sinuses</u>.
- 6. Splenic sinuses drain into pulp veins.
- 7. Pulp veins drain into trabecular veins.
- 8. Trabecular veins drain into <u>splenic vein</u> at the hilus.

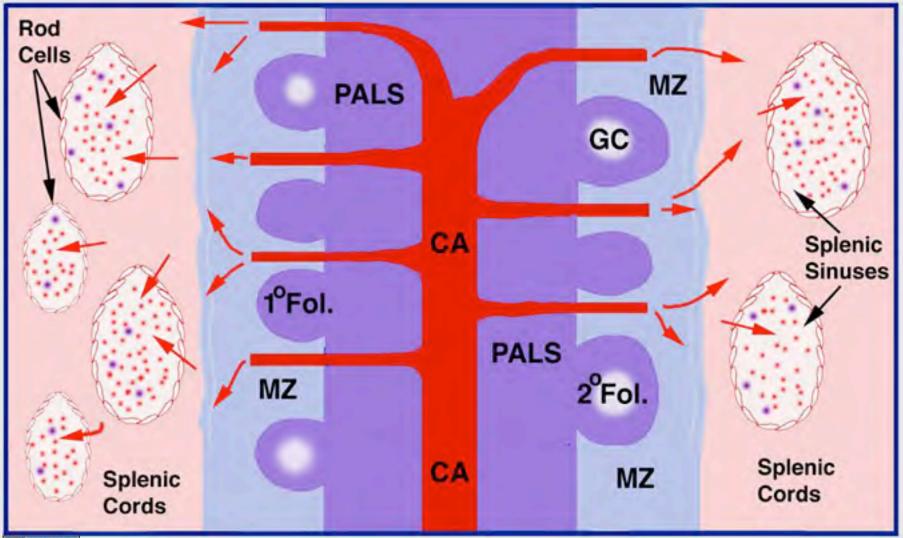
Circulation in the human spleen is primarily "OPEN:" blood pours into the red pulp, percolates through red pulp cords, and re-enters the bloodstream at splenic sinuses



Original Image: http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/histology/images/histology/lymph/display/lymph20015.jpg

NOTE: NO afferent lymph vessels –not necessary because lymphocytes can easily enter splenic parenchyma via "open" circulation pattern.

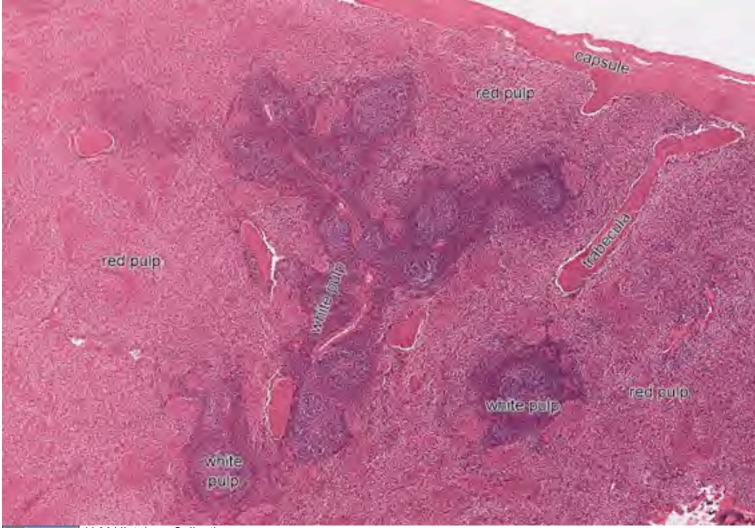
Splenic Circulation

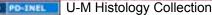


Wheater's, Functional Histology, Fifth Edition, 2006

Organization of the spleen: white pulp and red pulp White pulp: lymphatic aggregations around "central" arteries: periarterial lymphatic sheath (PALS): T-cells lymph nodules: B-cells

Red pulp: cords and sinuses

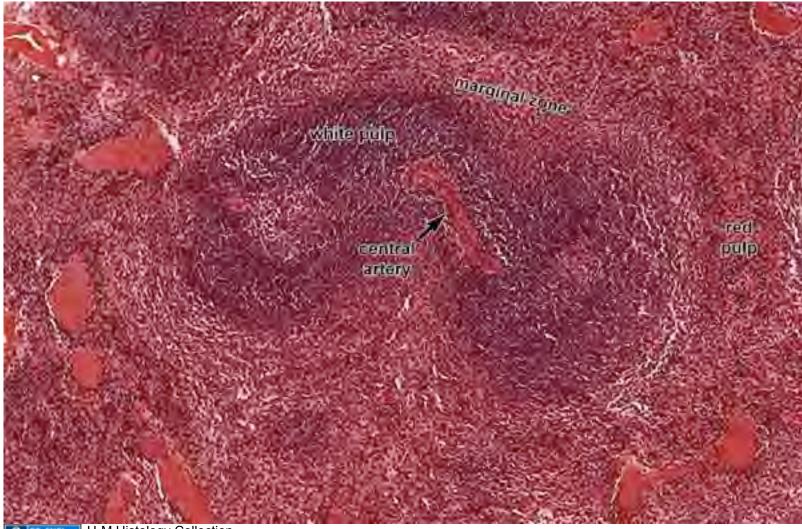




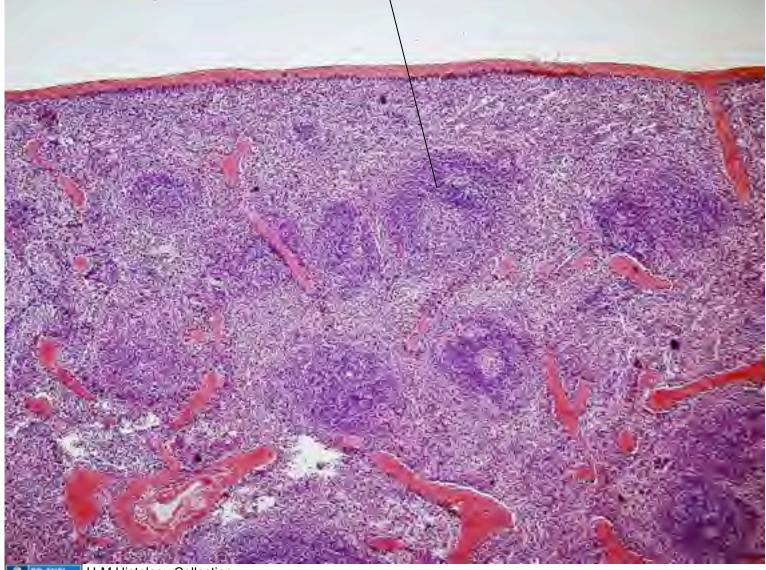
White pulp function

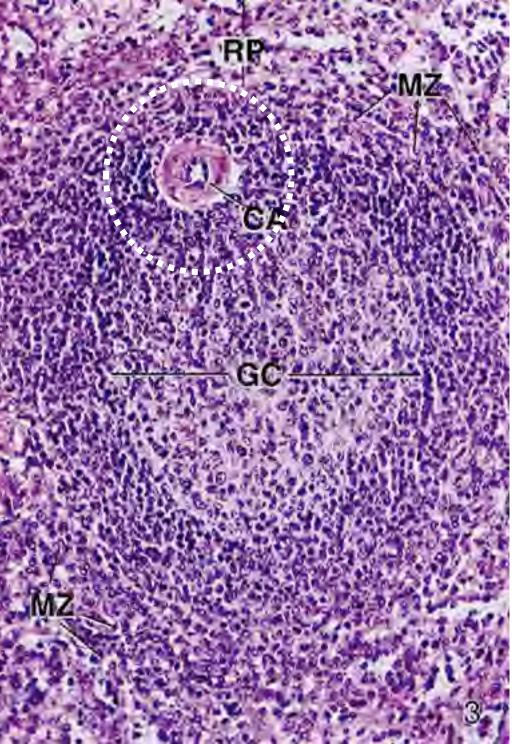
Blood and antigens pour into red pulp (more on that later) Antigen presentation takes place in MARGINAL ZONE

- T-cells (from PALS) provide "help" to activate mphages and B-cells
 - activated mphages stimulated to destroy ingested material (e.g. bacteria)
 - activated B-cells set up proliferative germinal centers



As the body is exposed to antigens and the immune system mounts an immune response in the form of <u>antibody production</u>, lymph nodules (w/ germinal centers) appear in the white pulp of the spleen.

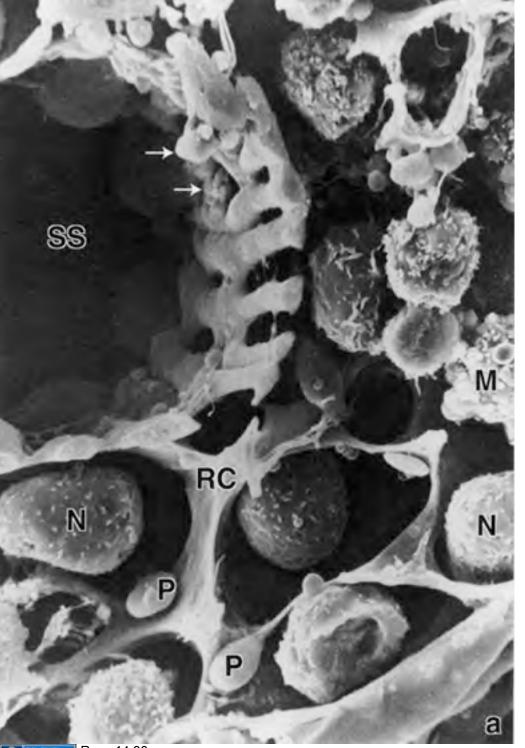




PALS w/ secondary follicle

Shown here with "central" artery cut in cross section –note that the CA has been pushed off to the side by the rapid expansion of cells in the germinal center (GC)

RP= red pulp MZ= marginal zone (antigen presentation) dashed circle = T-cell rich zone



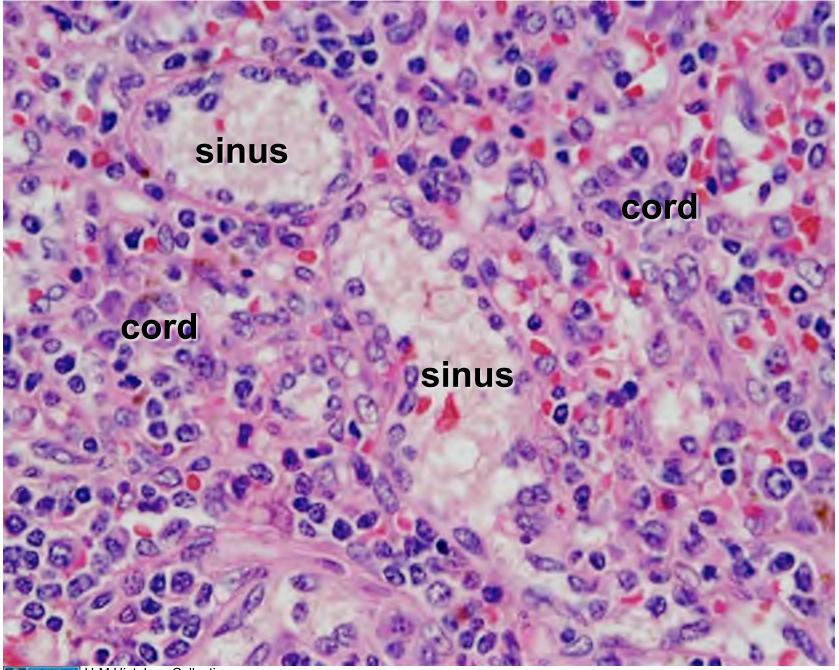
Scanning EM of a Splenic Sinus (SS) and Cord of Billroth

The cords contain, RBCs, neutrophils (N), macrophages (M), blood platelets (P)

A reticular cell framework (RC) supports the cord. The sinus is bounded by the epithelial cells that form the basket-like structure of the sinus (VS)

PO-INEL Ross 14.30a

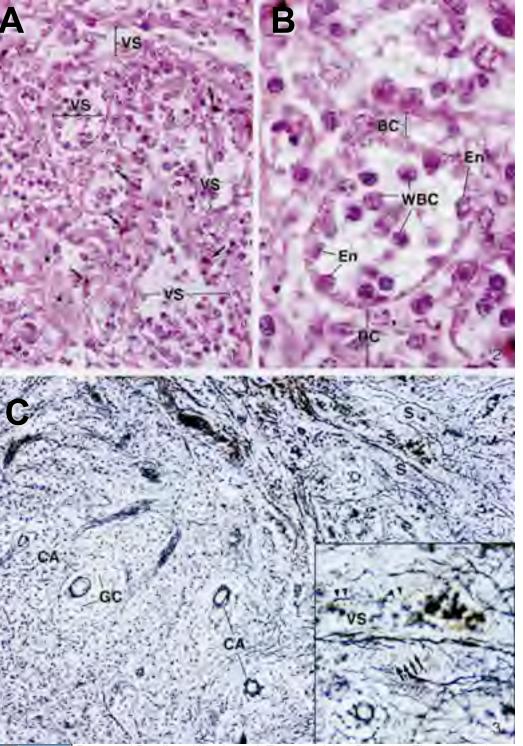
Spleen (red pulp) at high power (40x)





Percolation of blood into splenic sinuses

Here, you are inside the sinus looking through to the cord, where both a macrophage (M) and a neutrophil (N) are outside the sinus. Note that the endothelial cells have a rodlike appearance.



Ross and Pawlina. Histology: A Text and Atlas, Plate 36. Figure 1, 2, 3.

Splenic sinuses and cords

- A. red pulp
- B. higher mag of venous sinus and cords of Billroth

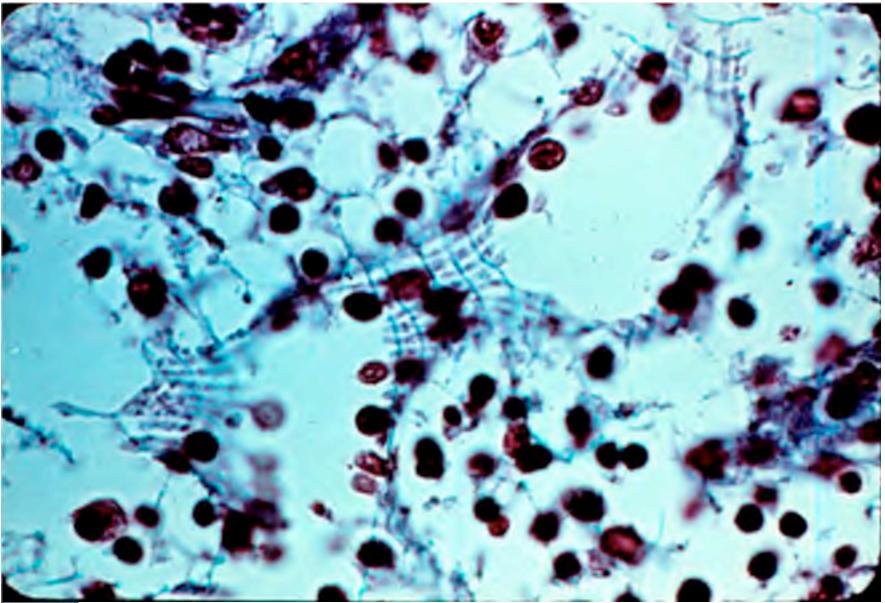
discontinuous basement membrane

- C. silver-stained section
- D. diagram

Image of splenic sinuses and cords removed

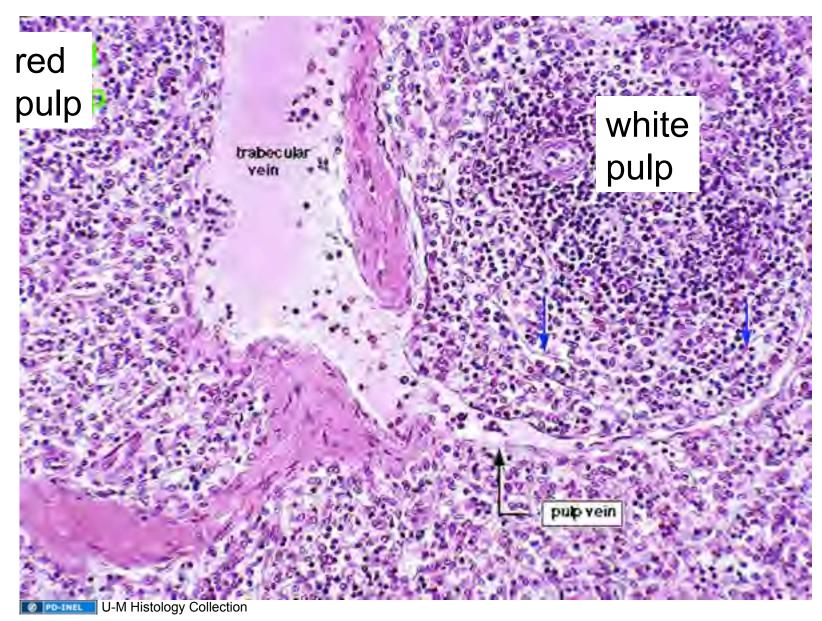
Original Image: http://immuneweb.xxmu.edu.cn/ Lymphoid%20System.files/UntiHE20.jpeg

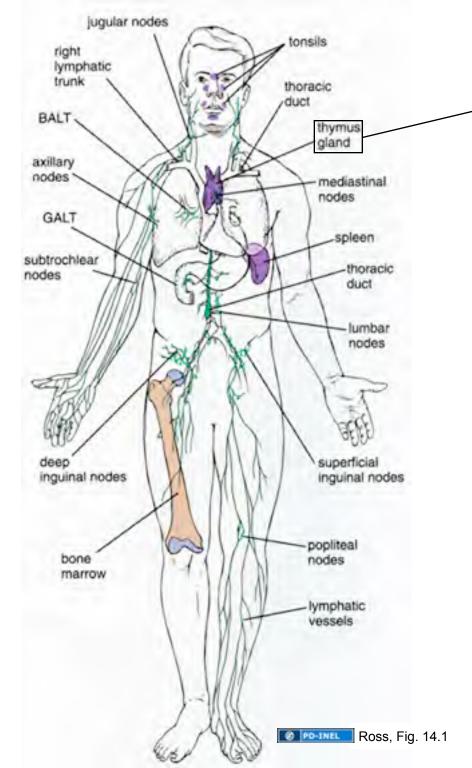
SPLEEN: venous sinus showing rodlike endothelial cells



SPLENIC CIRCULATION

Sinuses drain into splenic pulp veins, which, in turn, drain into trabecular veins. Trabecular veins travel within trabeculae and drain into splenic vein at the hilus.





-The Thymus

T-cell education

Self vs. nonself distinctions

Cell-mediated immune functions

Populates effector organs

Lymph nodes Lymphatic nodules Spleen Tonsils

The Thymus is a Primary Lymphoid (Immune) Organ Responsible For the Education of T-Cells

Located over the great vessels of the heart in the area of the body called the mediastinum

Develops from an invagination of EPITHELIUM of the 3rd pharyngeal pouch, so an endodermal organ.

Specialized epithelial cells (called <u>epithioreticular cells</u>) that are joined to one another by long processes with desmosomes on the extremities of the cells (like starfish joined together at the tips) make up the bag-like support for:

Lymphocytes that, when the organ is young, fill this "bag".

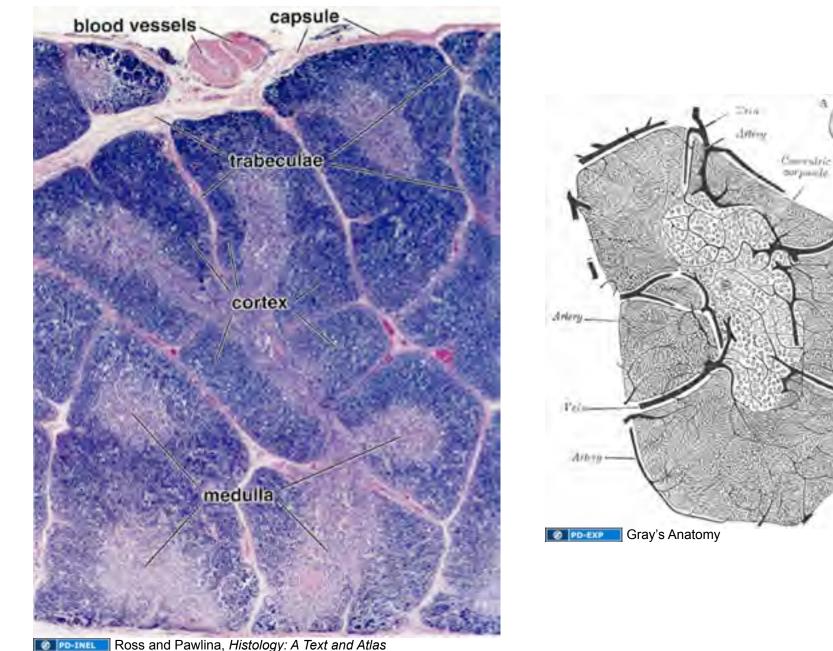
NOTE: There are generally no B cells in the Thymus.

The Young Thymus

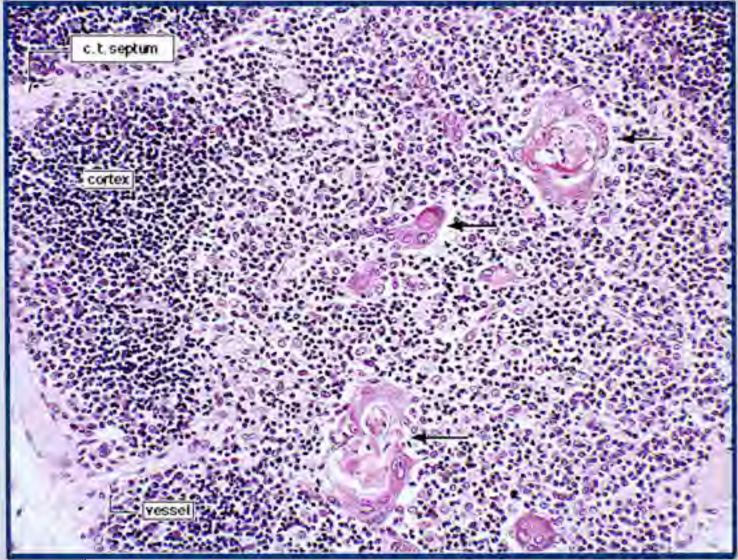
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Granniar Sills-

Surrounded by a CT <u>capsule</u>; <u>cortex</u> has a lot of lymphocytes, fewer in the <u>medulla</u> THERE ARE NO GERMINAL CENTERS IN THE THYMUS!



Thymic Cortex and Medulla Thymic (or Hassall's) Corpuscles

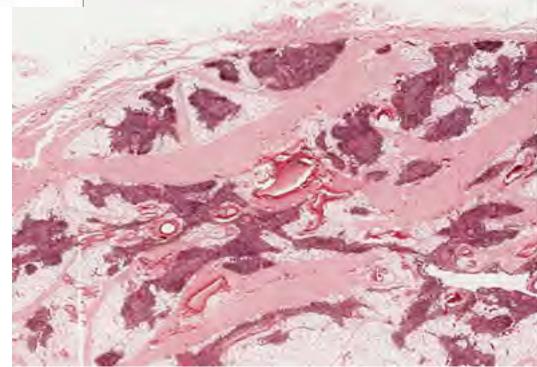


U-M Histology Collection

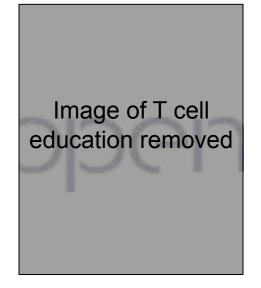
The young thymus

Thymus at puberty

The Thymus undergoes a process called THYMIC INVOLUTION, as T cells leave the thymus to populate other lymphoid effector organs, the organ shrinks, leaving only the epithelioretucular cells



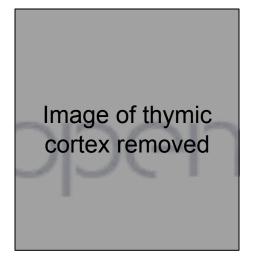
Overview of T-cell "education"

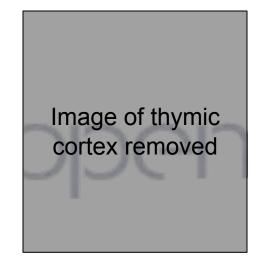


Original Image: http://www.nature.com/ nri/journal/v6/n2/images/nri1781-f4.jpg

- 1. Naïve T-cells enter medulla via diapedesis across venules
- 2. Pass into cortex to undergo POSITIVE selection:
 - Presented with MHC molecules and self or non-self antigens by ERCs
 - T-cells that recognize MHCs and self/nonself antigens "pass" this selection process and survive (those that don't undergo apoptosis)
- 3. Move into medulla to undergo NEGATIVE selection:
 - T-cells that recognize SELF antigens displayed by self MHCs (i.e. are :autoreactive") are eliminated
- 4. Differentiate into helper (CD4+) or cytotoxic (CD8+) T-cells and leave medulla via diapedesis across venules

Arterioles & capillaries in the thymic cortex are ensheathed by epithelioreticular cells forming a blood-thymus barrier.





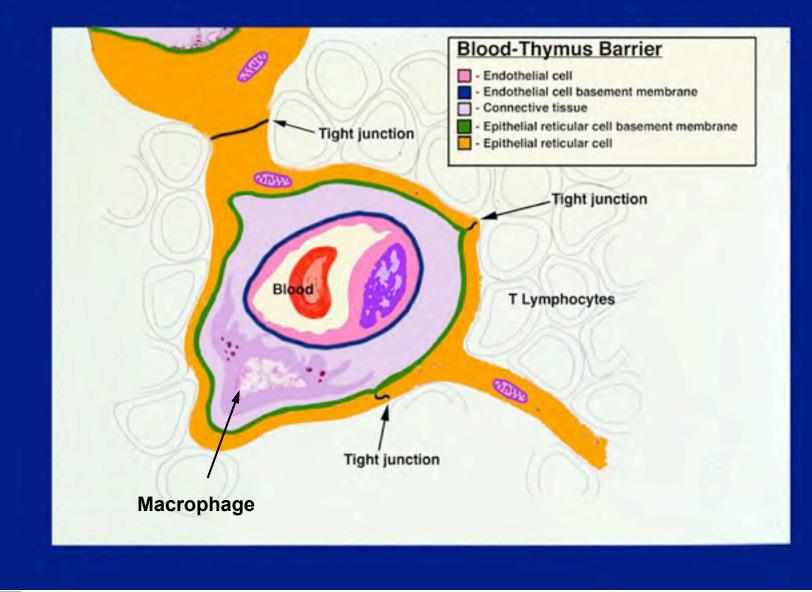
Blood-Thymus Barrier

Education of T-cells must occur in a very controlled environment such that antigens are ONLY presented by epithelial reticular cells.

To ensure that no other cells or free antigens are present, there is a very tight **BLOOD-THYMUS BARRIER** consisting of:

- 1. The blood capillary wall
 - endothelial cells
 - endothelial cell basal laminae
 - pericytes
- 2. Perivascular connective tissue
 - type III collagen
 - macrophages
- 3. Epithelioreticular cell layer
 - basal lamina of the epithelial reticular cells (type I ERCs)
 - epithelial reticular cells

(NOTE: T-cells can enter thymus ONLY via bloodstream – <u>NO AFFERENT LYMPH VESSELS!</u>)

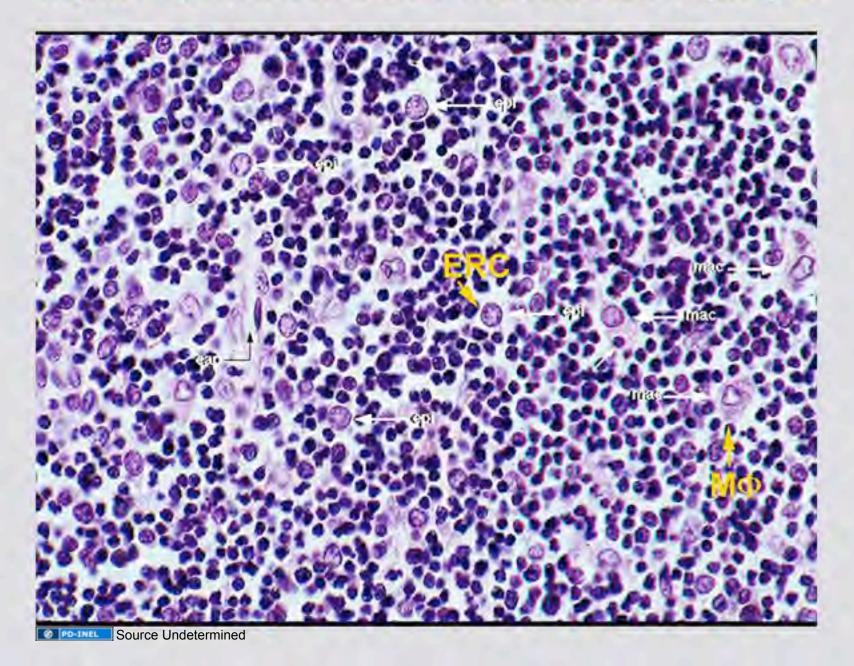


Source Undetermined

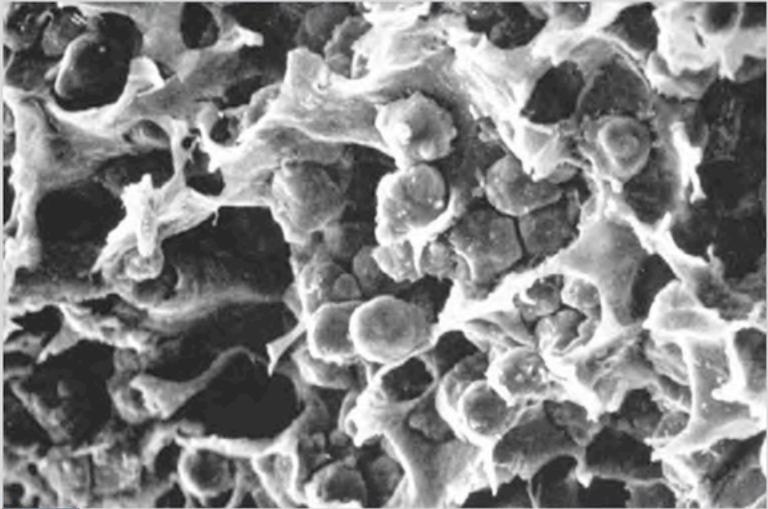
Thymic Cortex and Medulla Thymic (or Hassall's) Corpuscles



Thymic Epithelial Reticular Cells and Macrophages

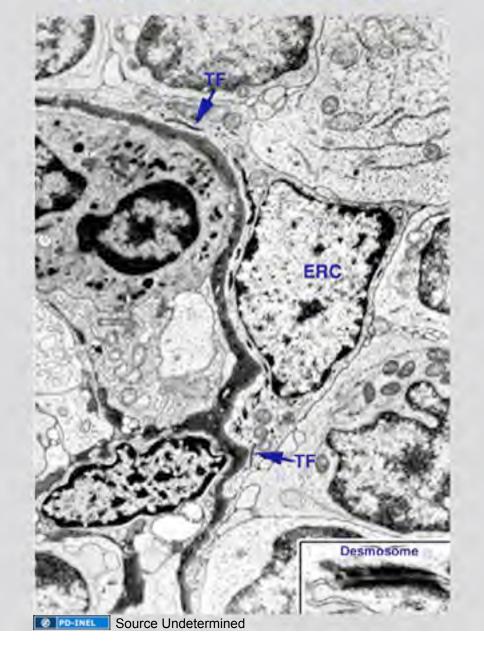


Thymocytes Differentiating in the Cytoplasmic Folds of Epithelial Reticular Cells

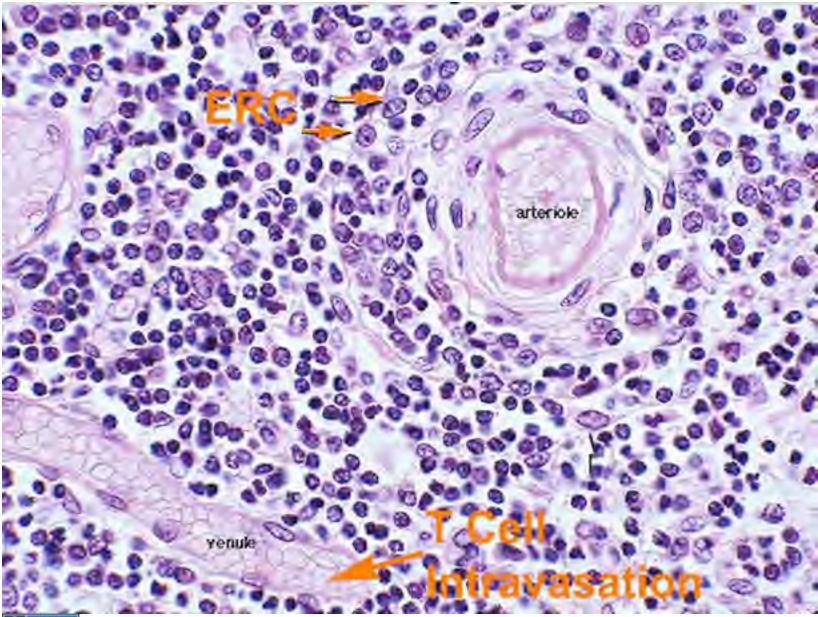


Source Undetermined

Formation of Tight Junctions Tonofilaments, and Desmosomes by Thymic Epithelial Reticular Cells



High mag view of medulla



Source Undetermined

T-cells that survive selection process allowed to cross venule endothelium (INTRAvasation) to enter circulation.

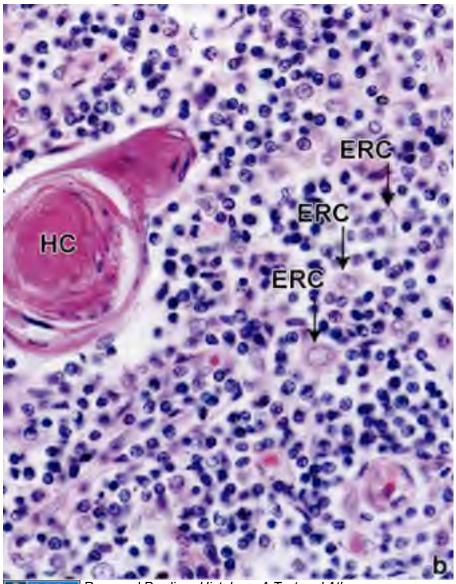
Hassall's corpuscles

Type VI ERCs; function not very well known, but produce interleukins (such as IL-4 and IL-7) and so likely influence T-cell differentiation



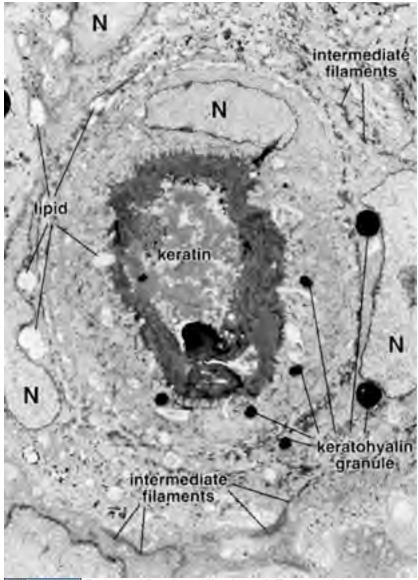
In the medulla, epithelioreticular cells form onionized structures called Hassall's corpuscles –quite prevalent in older thymus

LM view

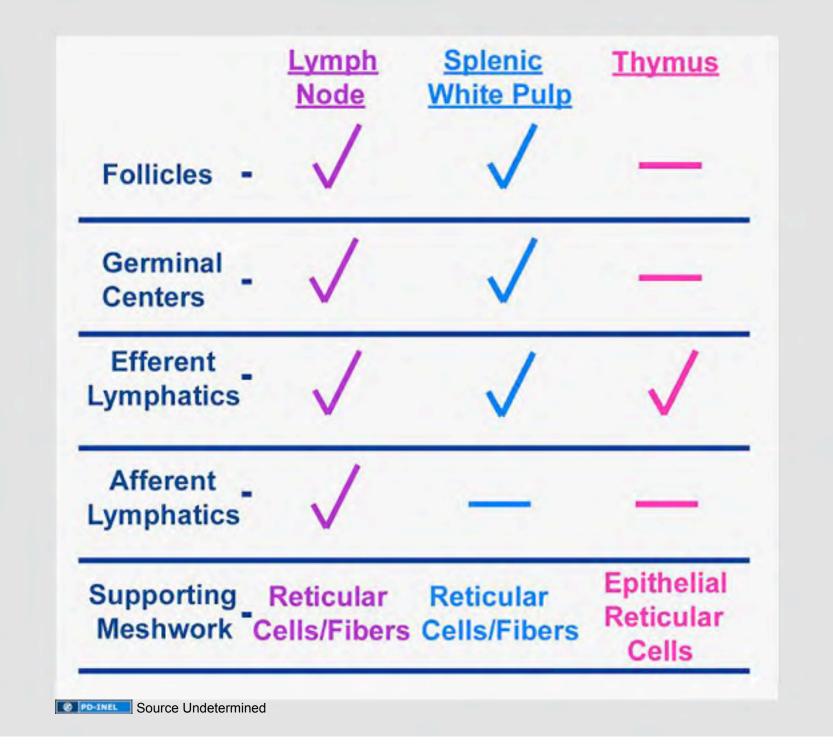


S POJNEL Ross and Pawlina, Histology: A Text and Atlas

EM view



Ross and Pawlina, Histology: A Text and Atlas



Additional Source Information

for more information see: http://open.umich.edu/wiki/CitationPolicy

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- Slide 36: Original Image: http://human.freescience.org/images/Illu_lymph_node_structure.png

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Slide 83: Source Undetermined Slide 84: Source Undetermined Slide 84: Ross and Pawlina, *Histology: A Text and Atlas*; Ross and Pawlina, *Histology: A Text and Atlas* Slide 85: Source Undetermined