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COPEing with cytokines

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Abstract

COPE is the electronic updated version of the *Dictionary of Cytokines* (Wiley; New York:1994) and represents a comprehensive online reference guide to the field of cytokine research.

Content

COPE is the electronic updated version of the *Dictionary of Cytokines* (Wiley; New York:1994) and represents a comprehensive online reference guide to the field of cytokine research. The database is maintained by one person, and as there are currently over 50,000 entries organized on over 6,650 separate web pages, this represents a labor of love of monumental proportions.

Navigation

Navigation through the site is simplicity itself. An alphabetical jump section allows you to jump to a list of the current entries for each letter. From this list you can select the cytokine of interest and go to its own specific web page. If you are more interested in a certain area of research than in a particular cytokine, the site has grouped some information within the encyclopedia in the form of 'mini-dictionaries' (for example, Apoptosis MiniCOPE Dictionary), and also has a link to a series of topics in cytokine research (for example, wound healing), which will then direct you to a detailed description of each area and how various cytokines are involved.

Reporter's comments

Timeliness

The last update for COPE was in August 1999.

Best feature

For anyone working with cytokines this is a very useful site. It is very easy to navigate and is well laid out. A basic introduction to cytokines is provided, and several interesting sections including the 'mini-encyclopedias' allow the researcher to find the information they require quickly.

Worst feature

The lack of a recent update is a shame. As an example, the section devoted to insulin-like growth factors (IGFs) discusses the gene structures of IGF1 and IGF2. IGF2 is described as having five exons. This is completely inaccurate, as a tenth exon was described for the gene early last year. Similar inaccuracies also occur for the IGF-binding proteins. In an attempt to improve the speed of updating, the author has initiated a novel procedure called 'CytokineAdopt'; if you are interested, you agree to adopt a particular cytokine and update its information.

Wish list

I would love to see more people becoming active and adopting cytokines to update, so that the site as a whole becomes more timely.

Related websites

More on cytokines can be found at Transpath signal transduction browser, Cell signaling networks database, and the Growth Hormone Research Society.

Table of links

References

1. Cytokines Online Pathfinder Encyclopaedia (COPE).