

# Signal Transduction in Immune Cells

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30.04.2025

Carlos Plaza Sirvent

RUHR  
UNIVERSITÄT  
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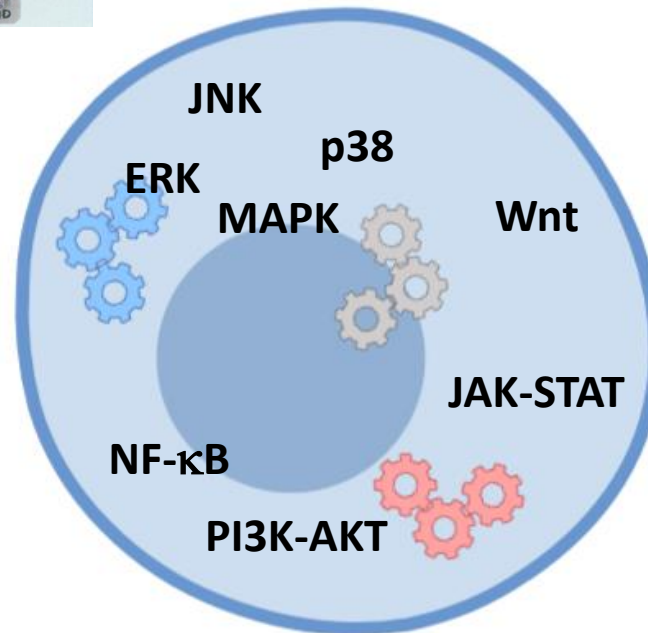
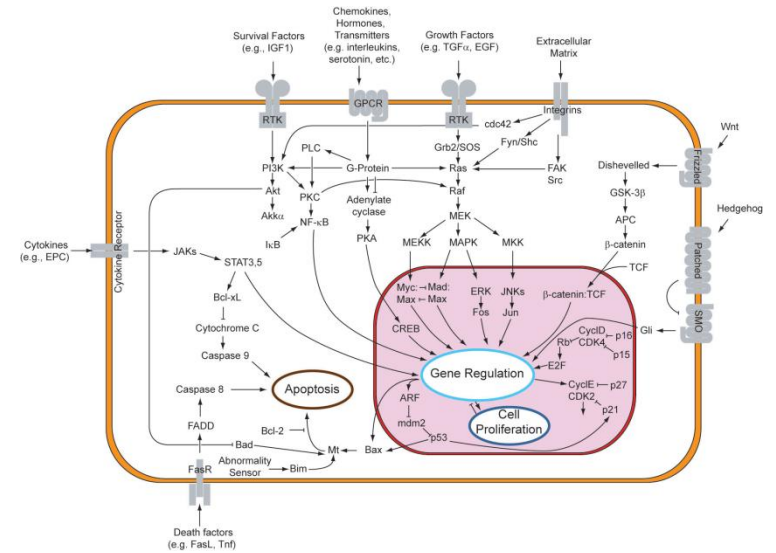
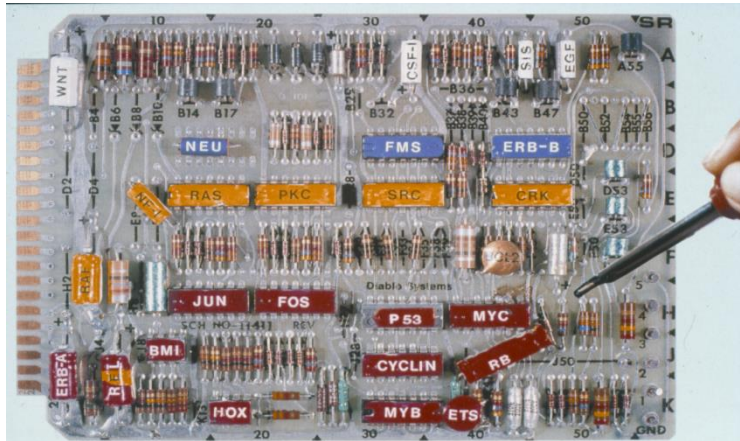


Molecular Immunology

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- General Principles of Signal Transduction
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  - Receptors
  - Mediators
- T cell receptor (TCR) signaling
- NFAT signaling pathway
- IL-2 signaling pathway

# Introduction



# Introduction

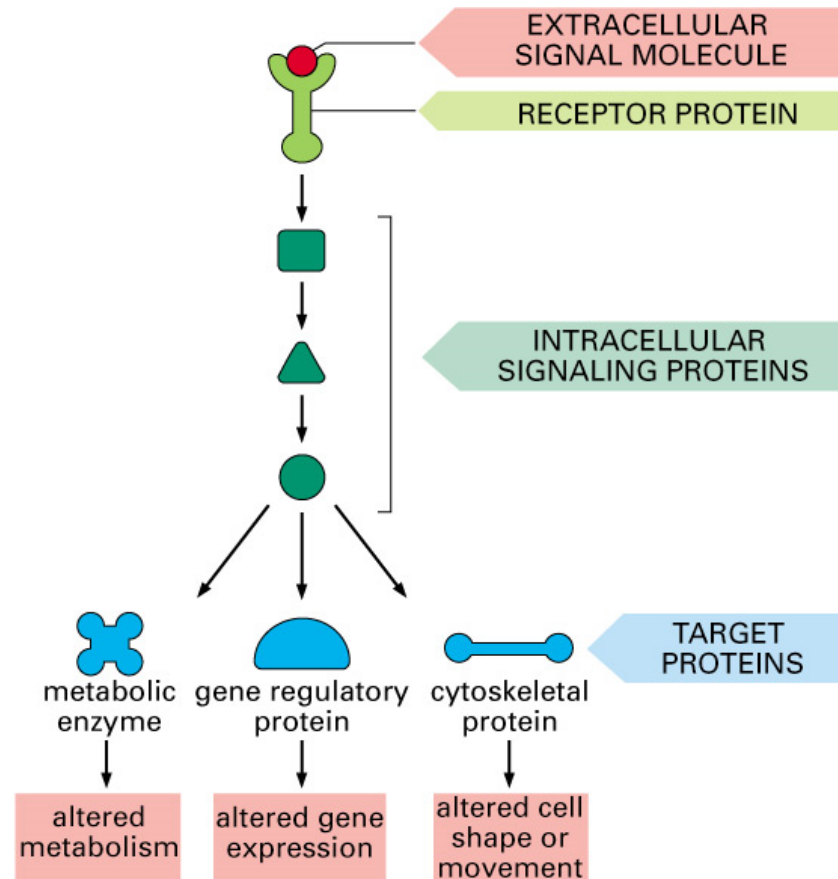
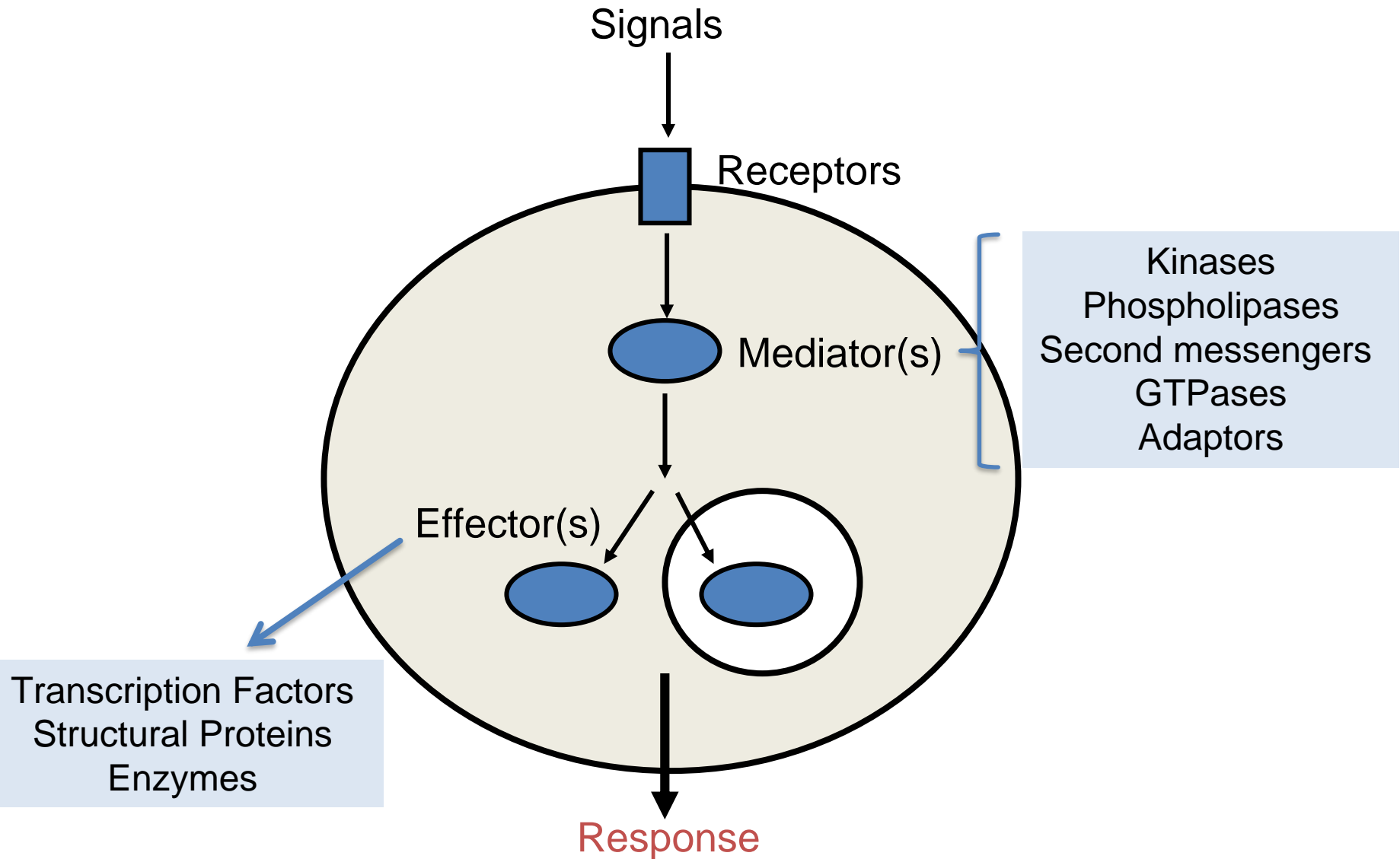


Figure 15–1. Molecular Biology of the Cell, 4th Edition.

# Introduction



# Response

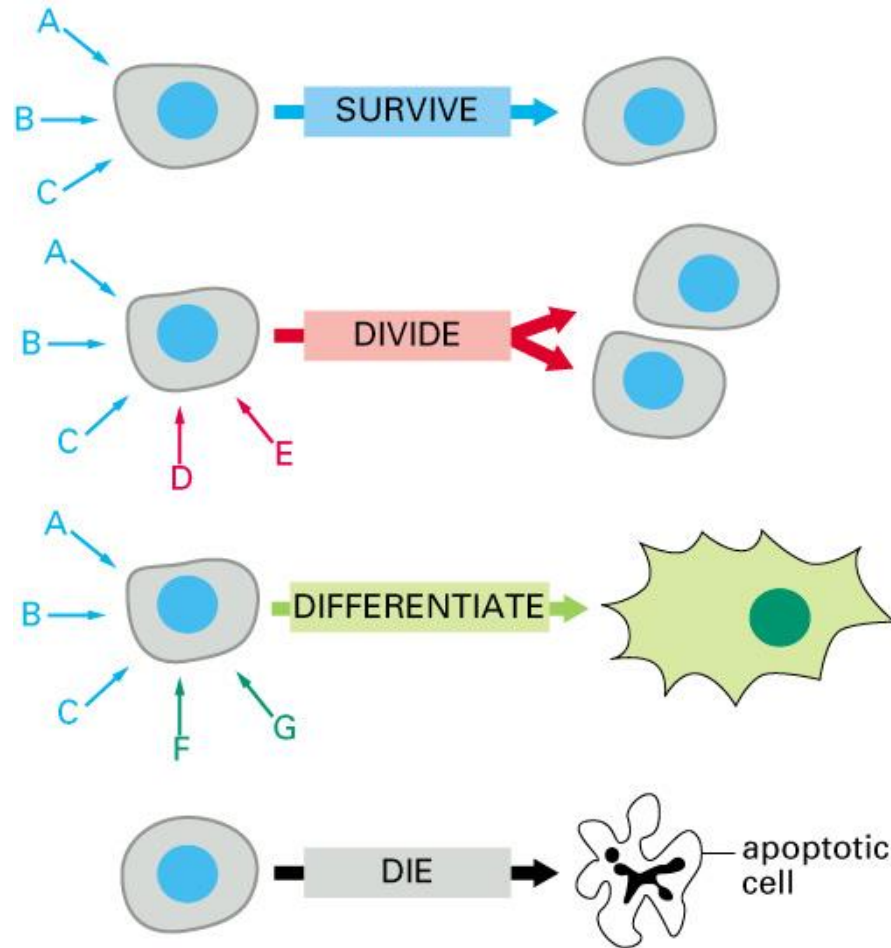
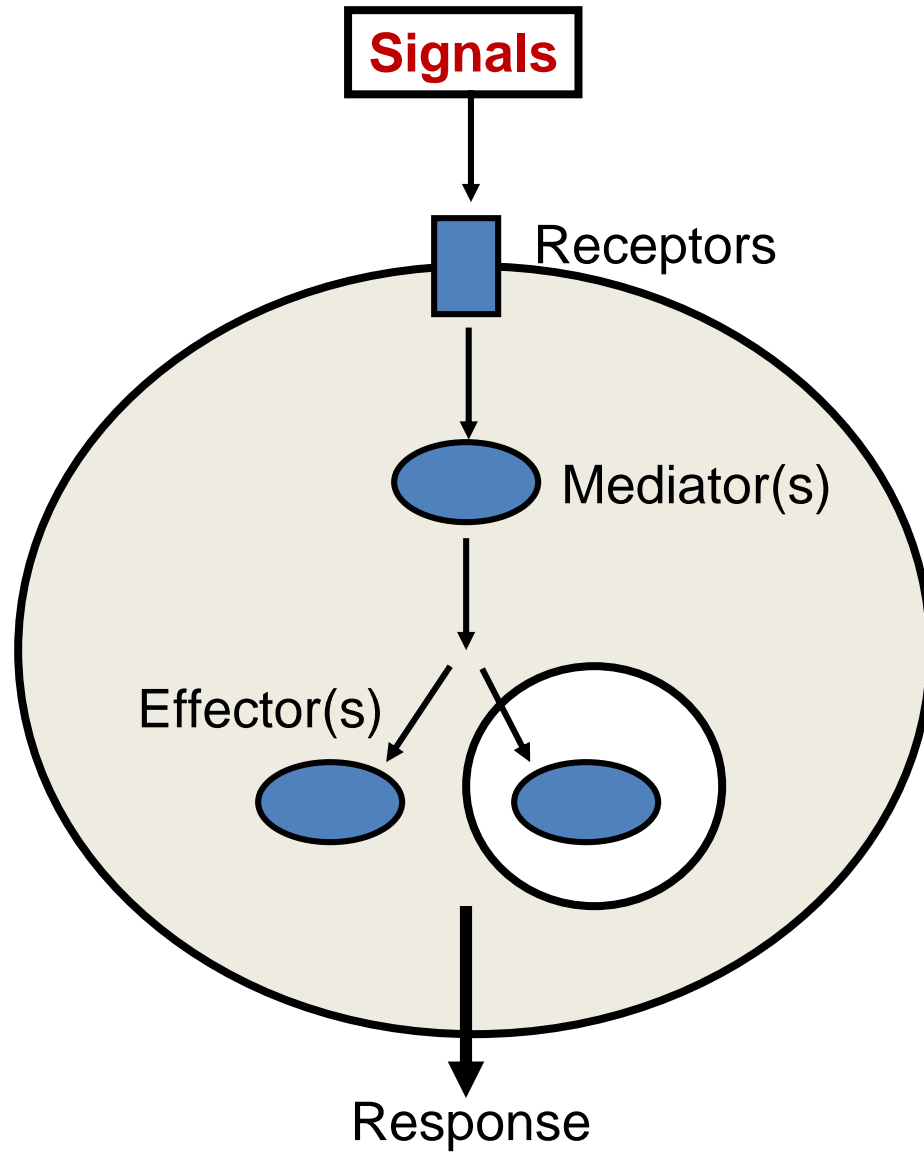


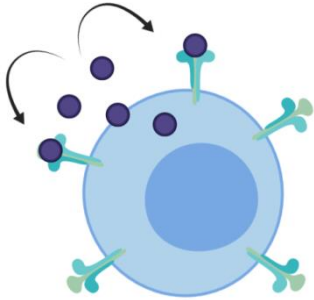
Figure 15-8. Molecular Biology of the Cell, 4th Edition.

# Signals

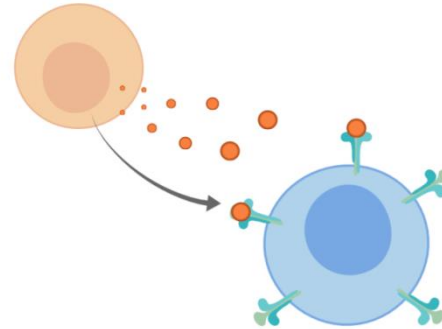


# Signals

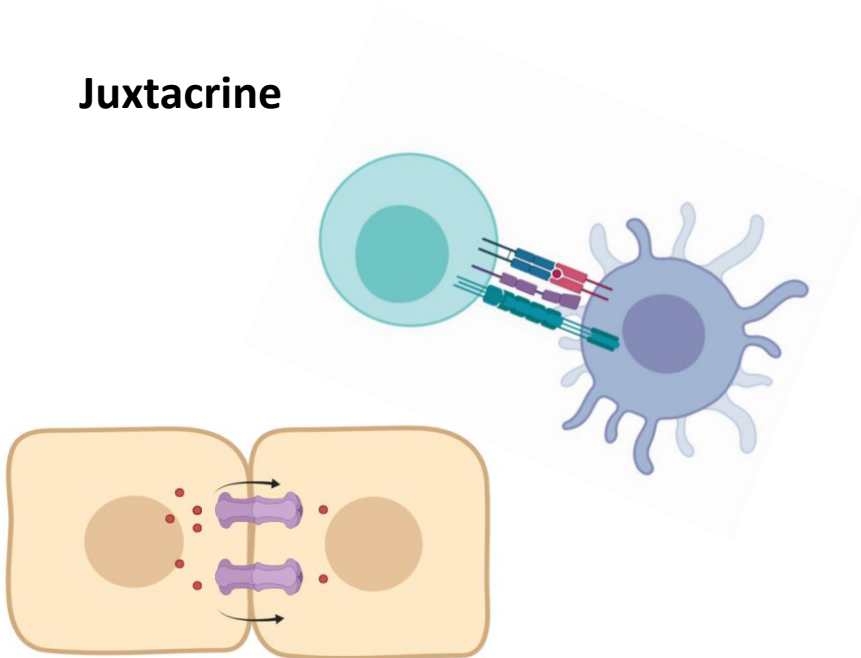
**Autocrine**



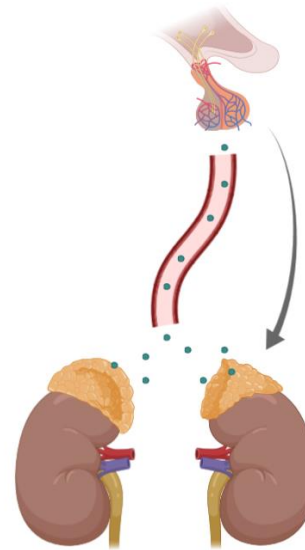
**Paracrine**



**Juxtacrine**



**Endocrine**





# Signals

## Ligands

Proteins

Small peptides

Aminoacids

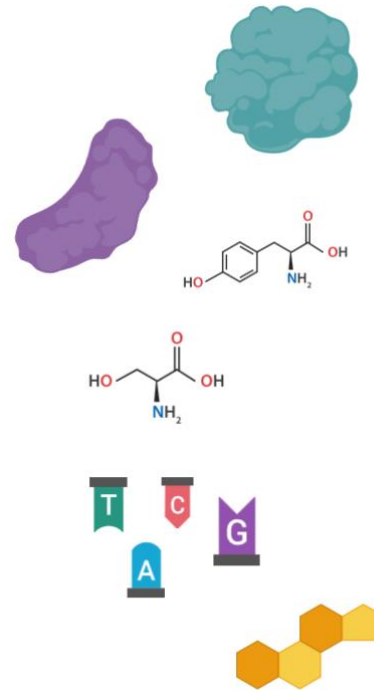
Nucleotides

Steroids

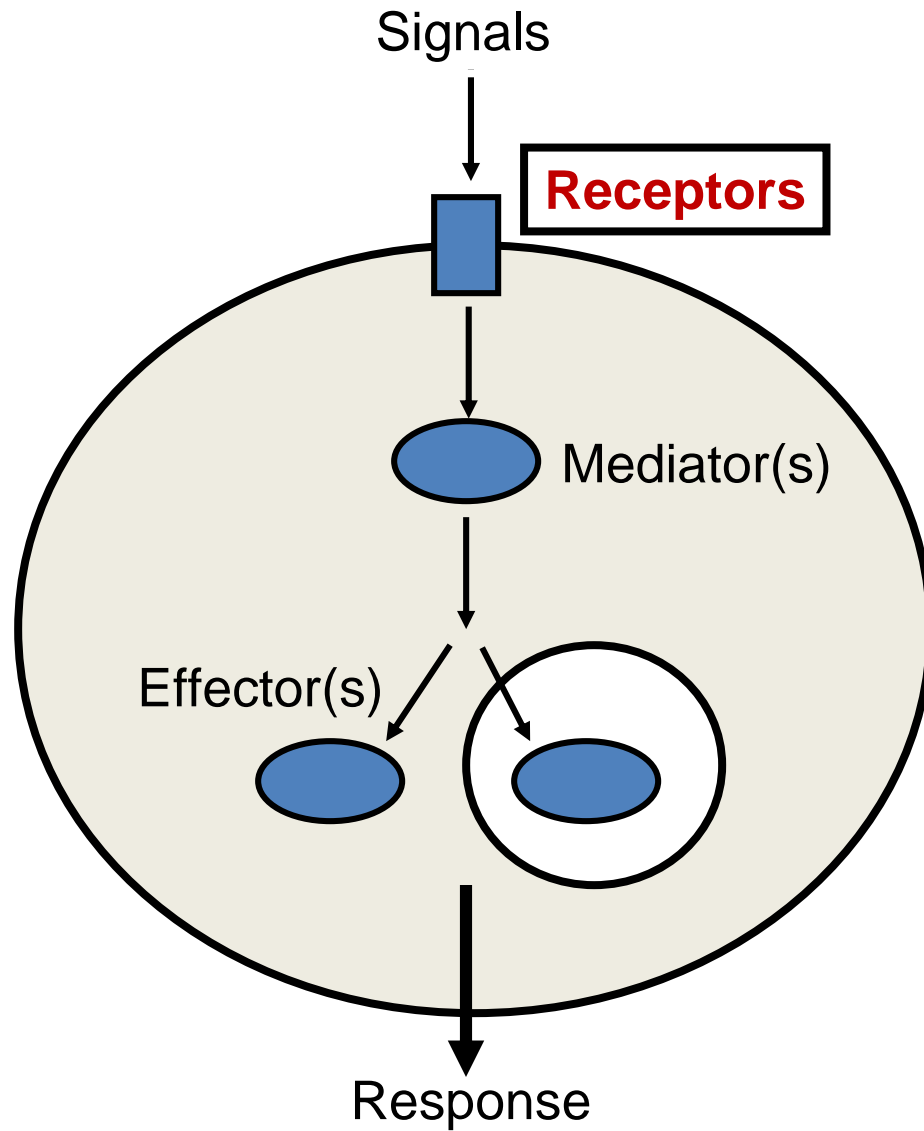
Retinoids

Fatty acids derivatives

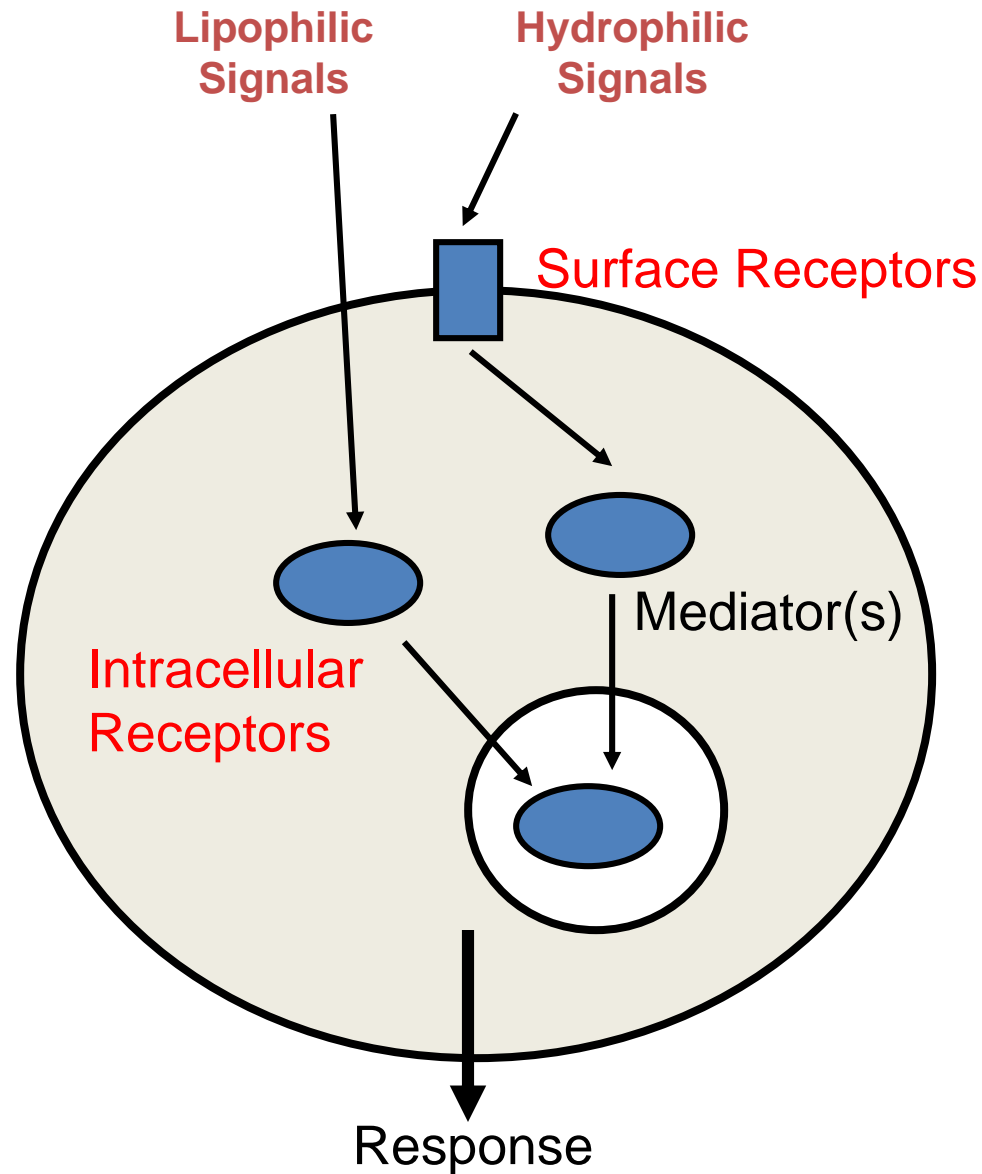
NO, CO



# Receptors



# Receptors

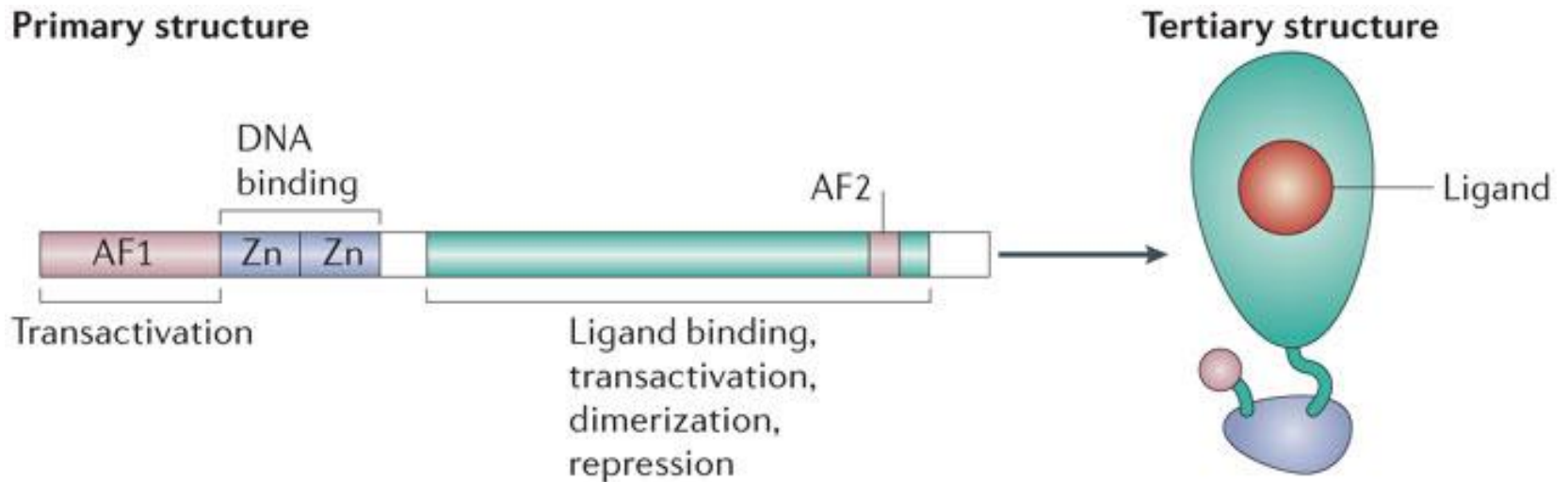


# Intracellular Receptors

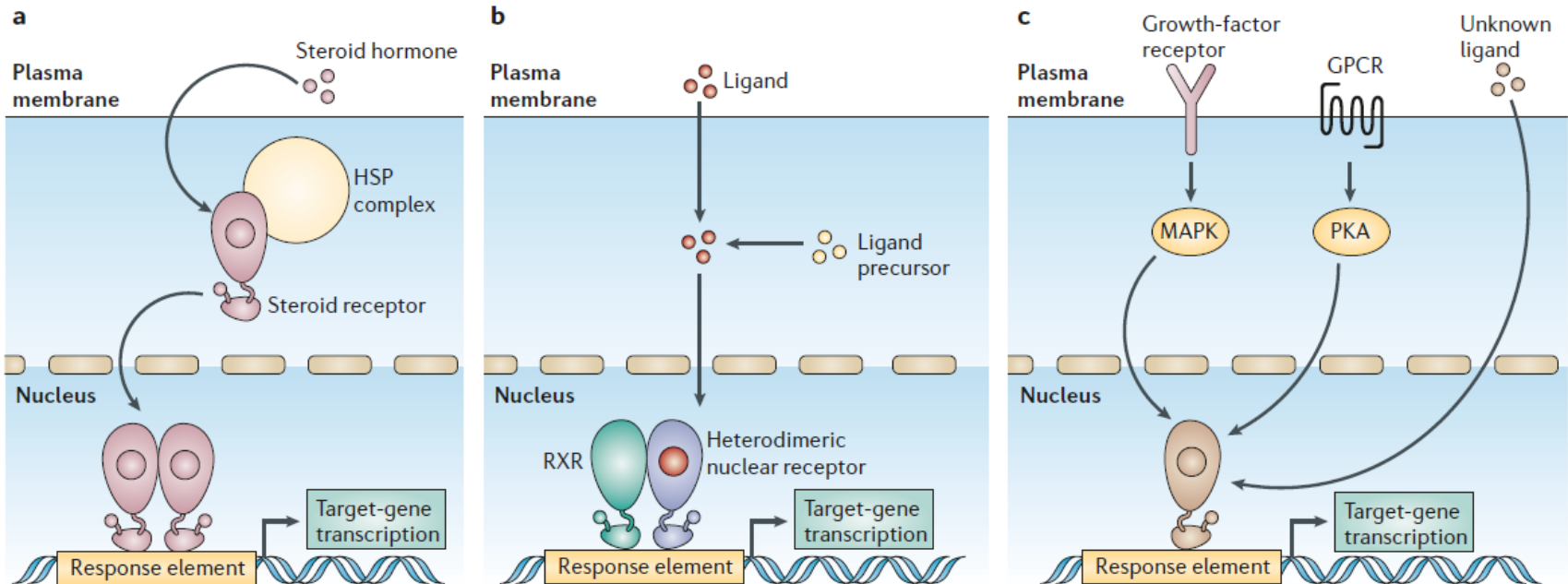
## Lipophilic ligands

- Estrogen, progesterone, testosterone
- Vitamin D
- Glucocorticoids and mineralocorticoids
- Thyroid hormone

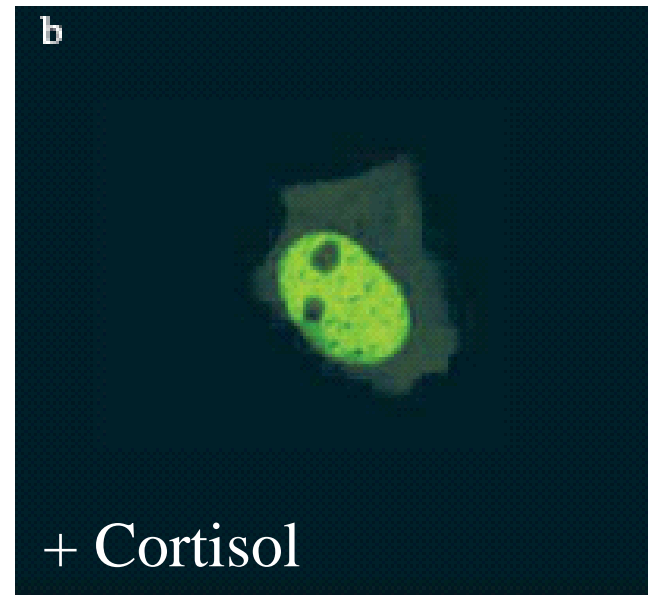
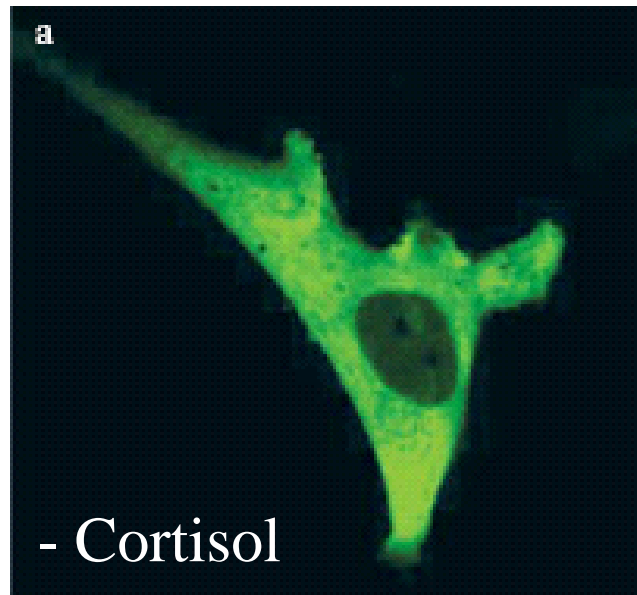
# Domain structure of nuclear receptors



# Nuclear-receptor classes



# Intracellular dynamic of GFP-labelled glucocorticoid receptor



# Anti-inflammatory properties of Glucocorticoids

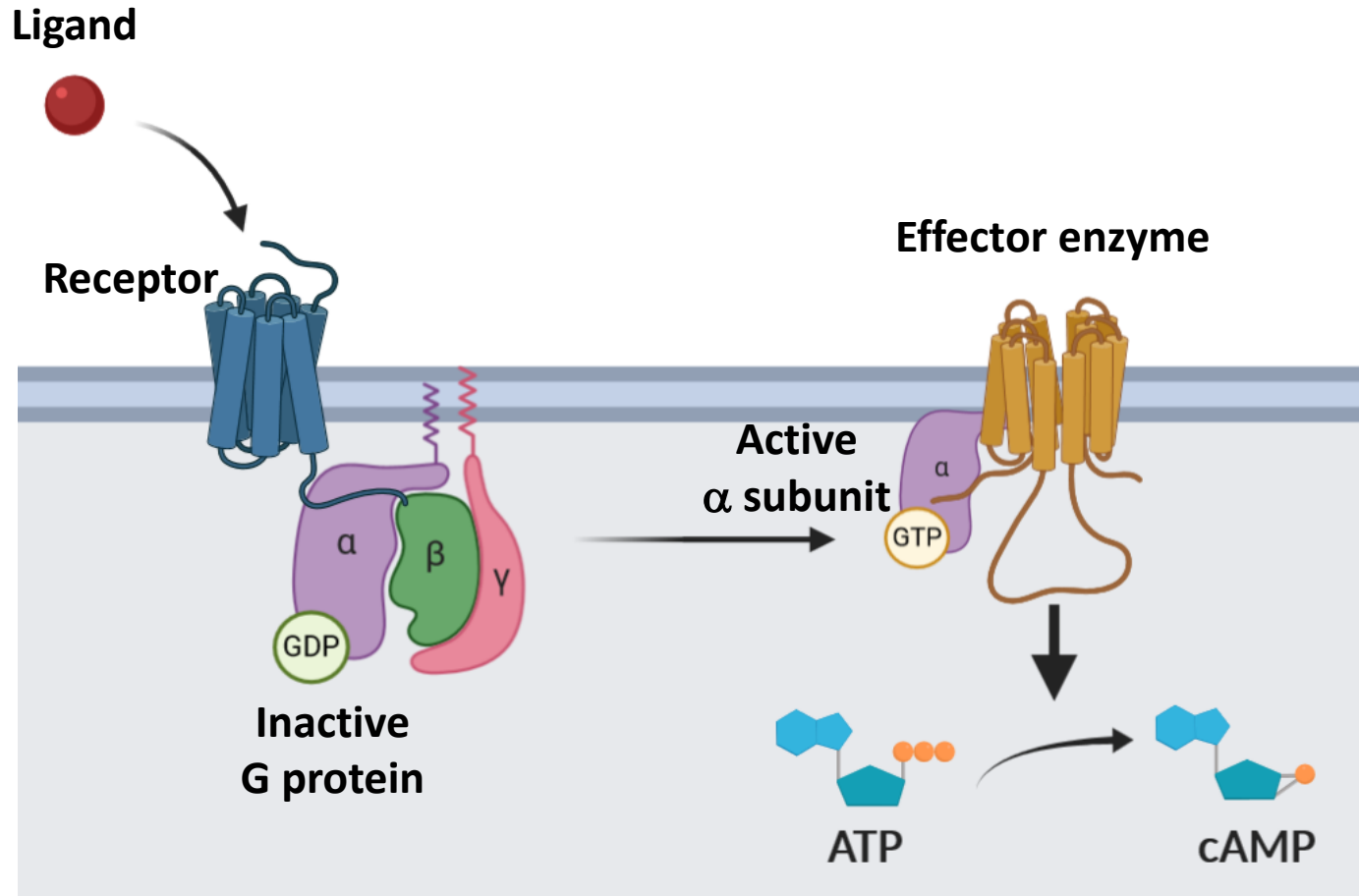
- Glucocorticoids inhibit NF- $\kappa$ B and AP-1 pathway activation preventing expression of inflammatory genes
- Glucocorticoids induce apoptosis of immature (CD4<sup>+</sup> CD8<sup>+</sup> SP) thymocytes



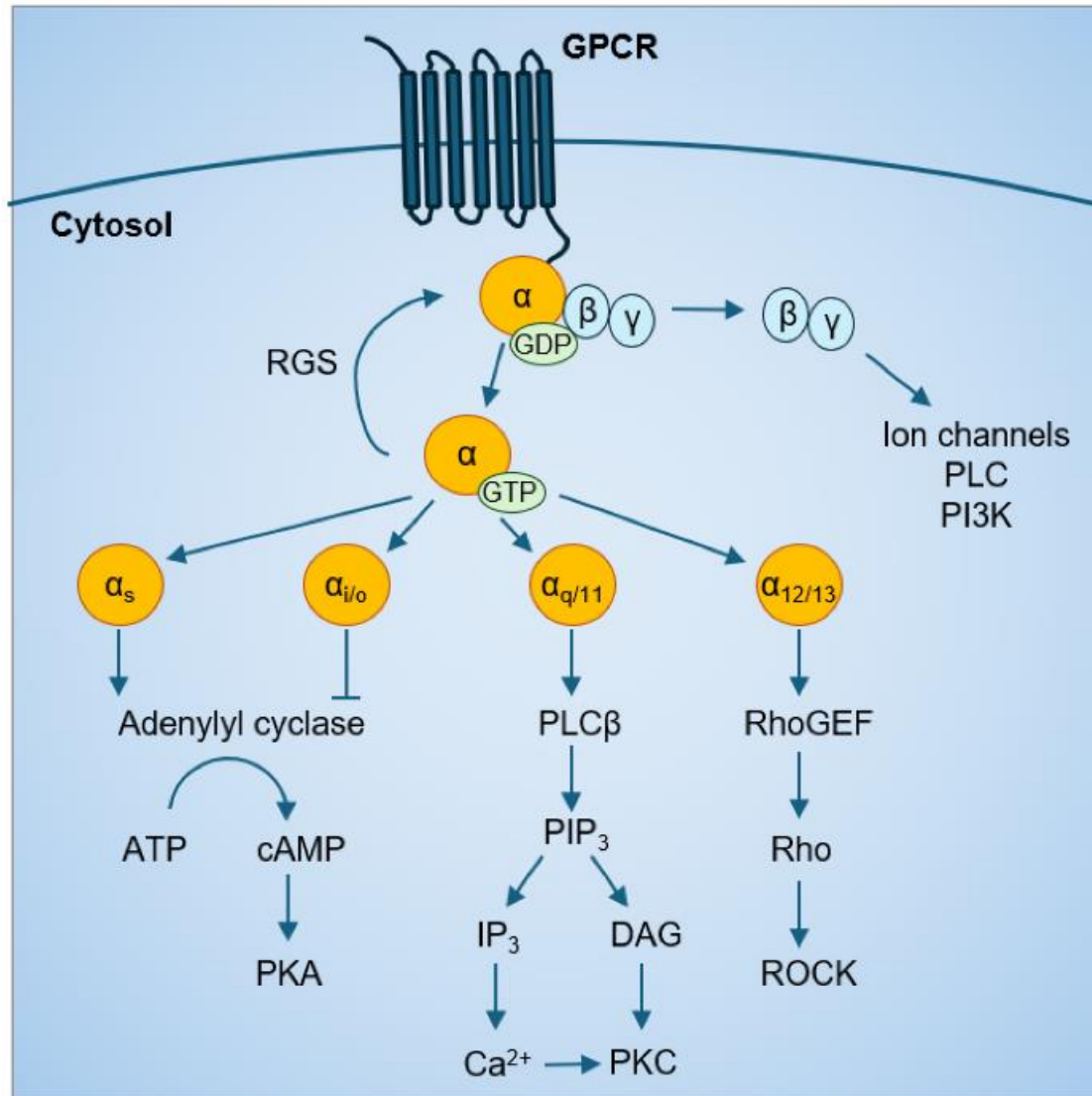
# Surface Receptors

- G-protein coupled receptors (GPCR)
- Ion channel receptors
- Tyrosine kinase-linked receptors
- Receptors with intrinsic enzymatic activity

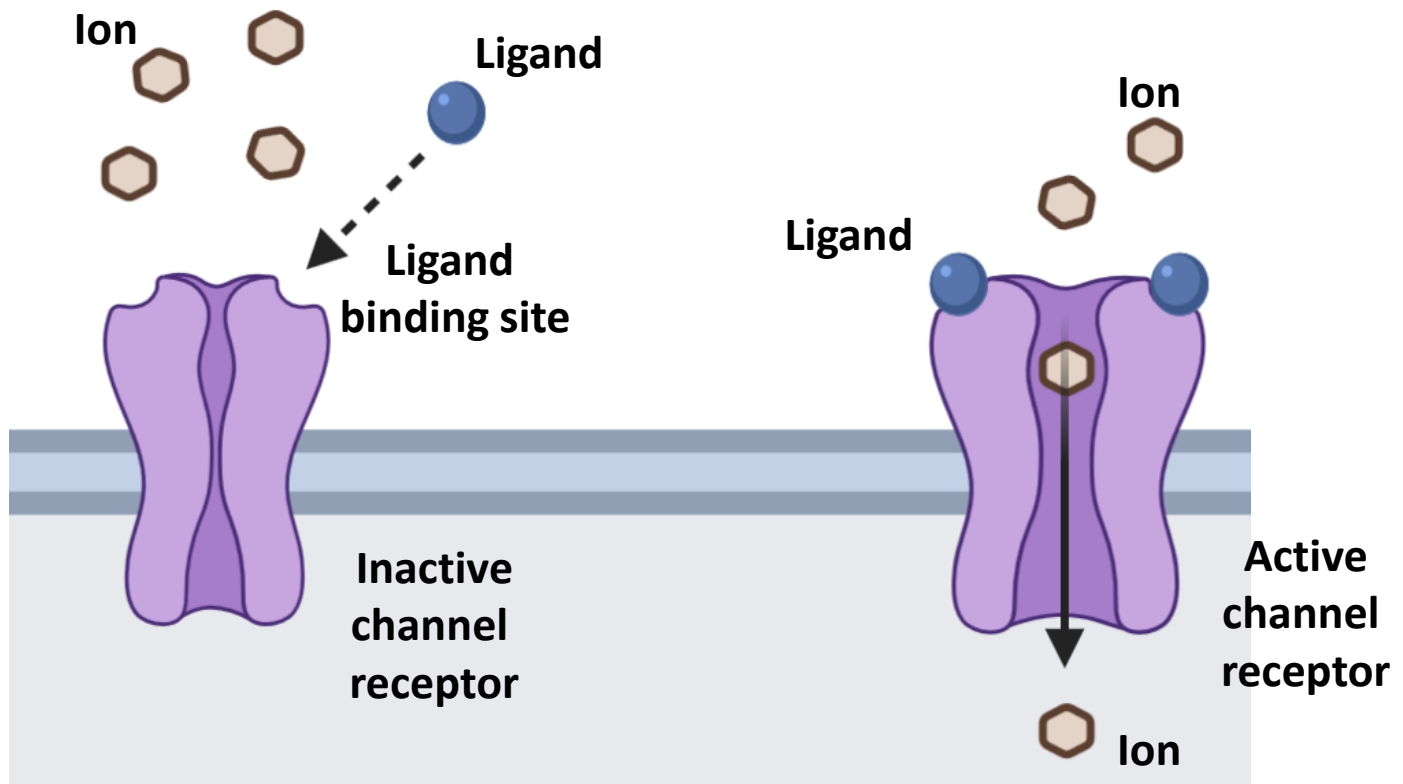
# G-protein coupled receptors (GPCR)



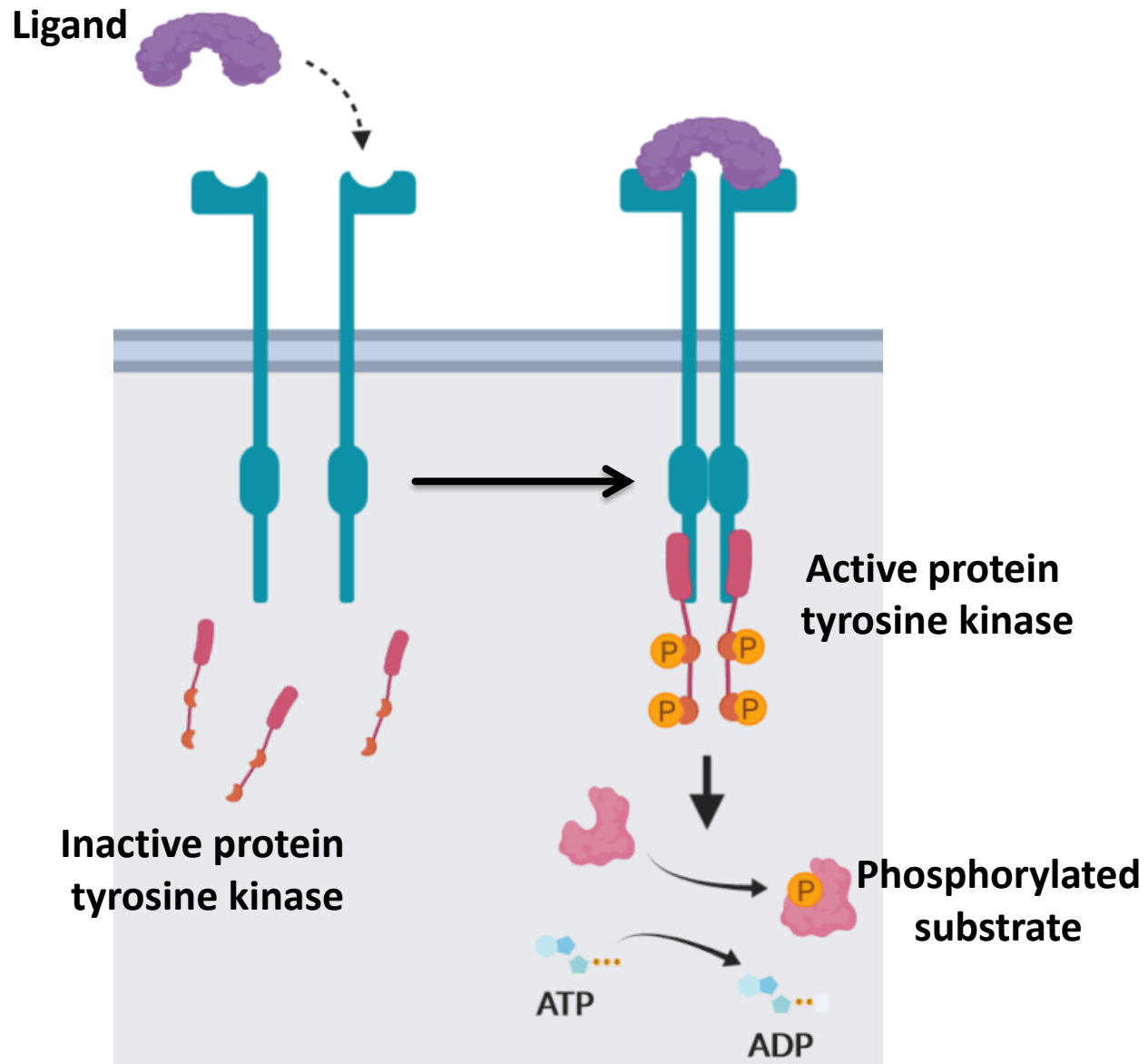
# G-protein coupled receptors (GPCR)



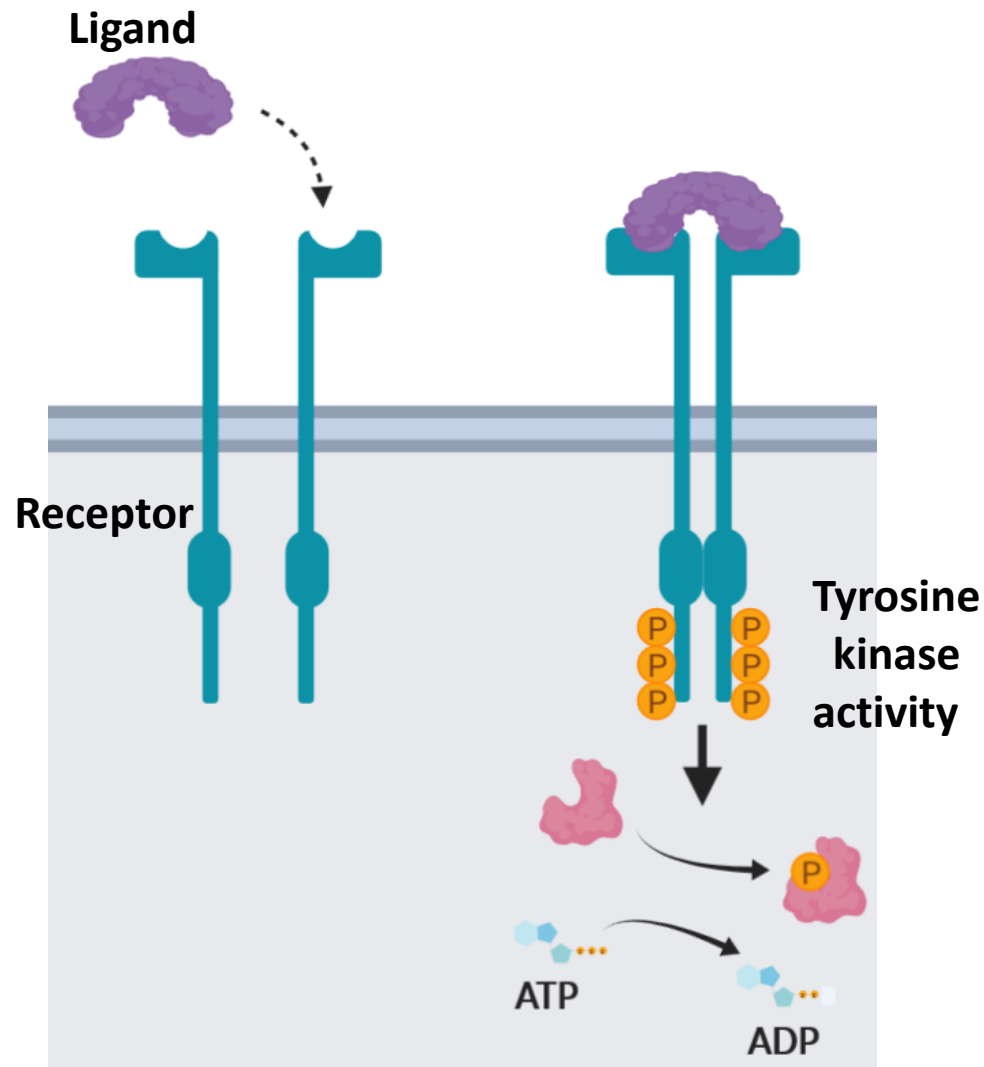
# Ion channel Receptor



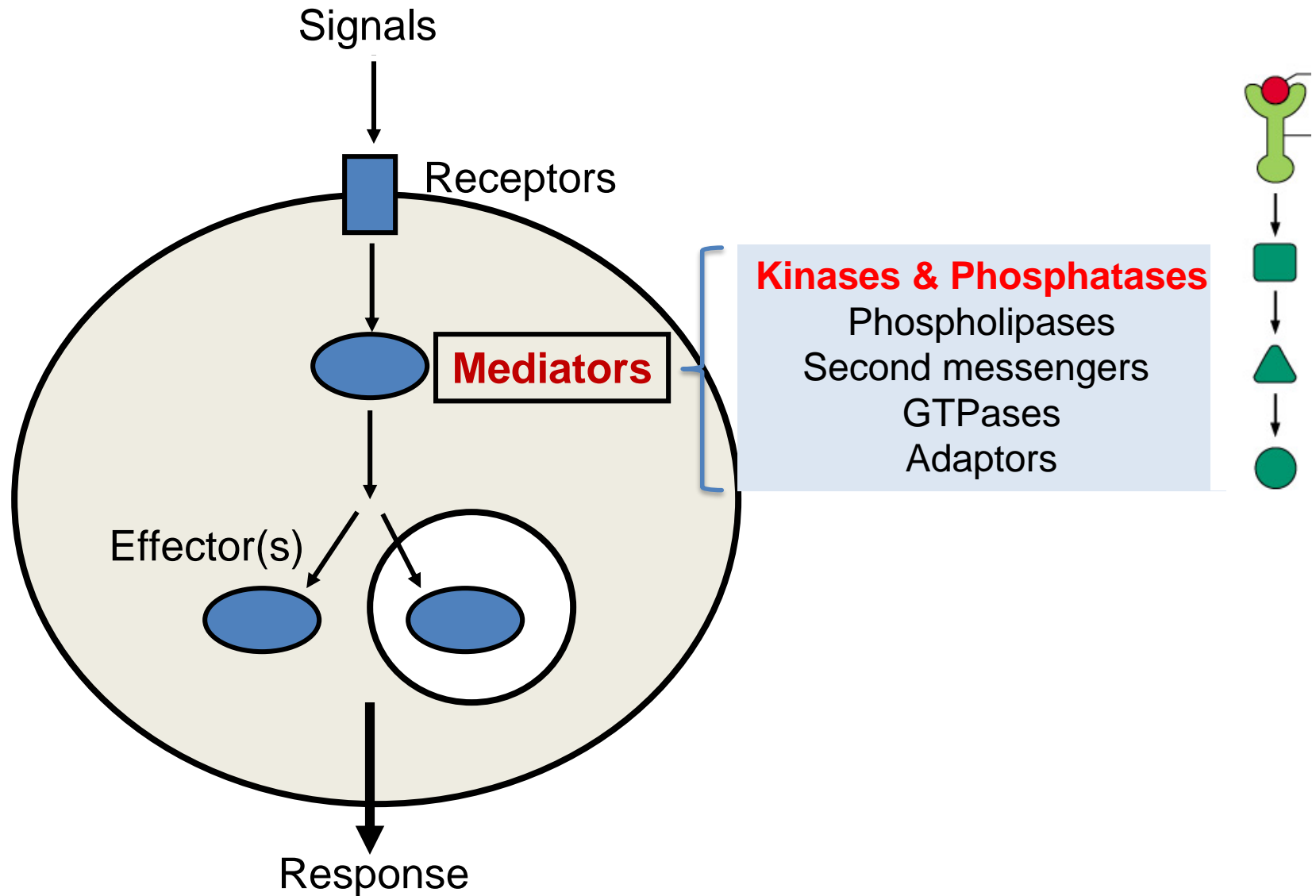
# Tyrosine kinase-linked receptors



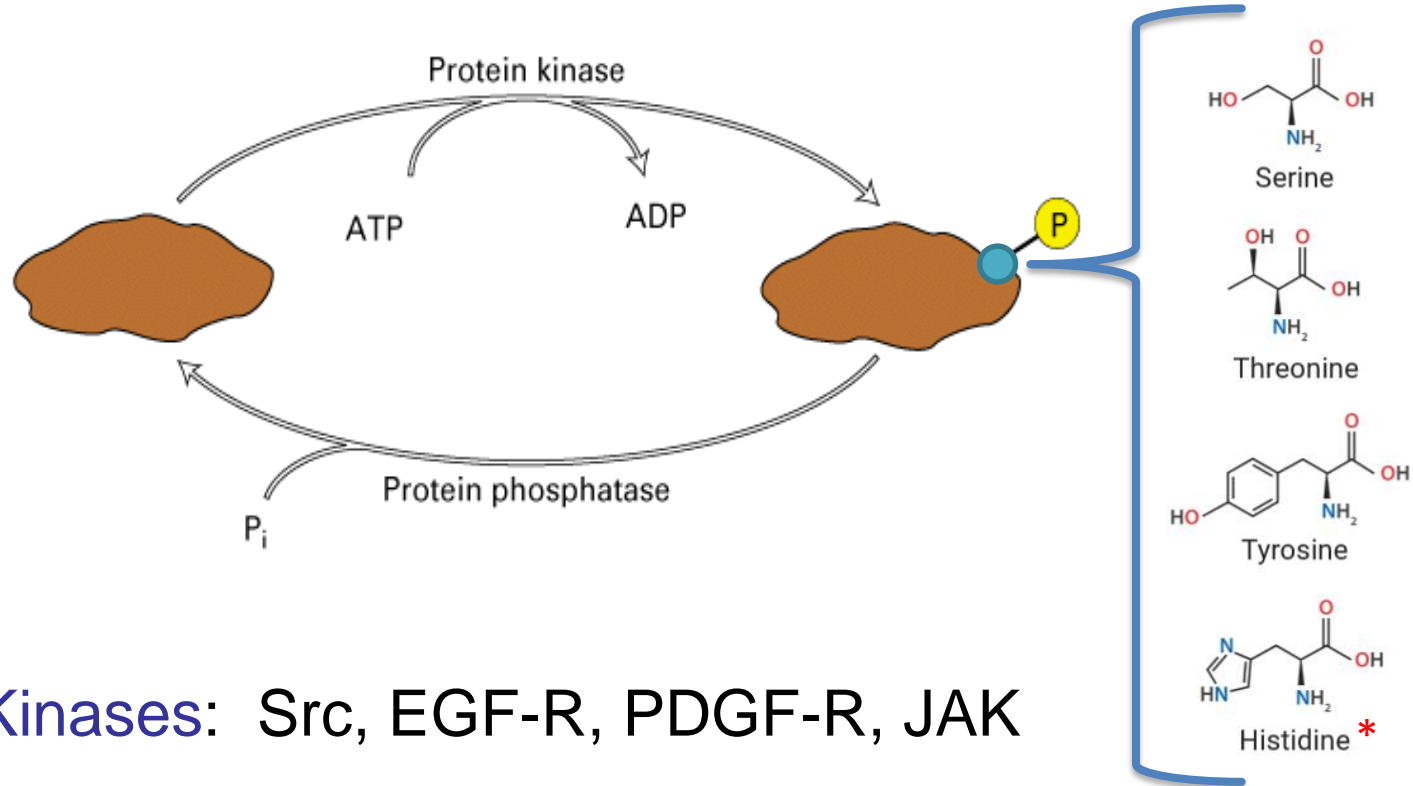
# Receptors with intrinsic enzymatic activity



# Mediators



# Protein Kinases & Phosphatases



**Tyr Kinases:** Src, EGF-R, PDGF-R, JAK

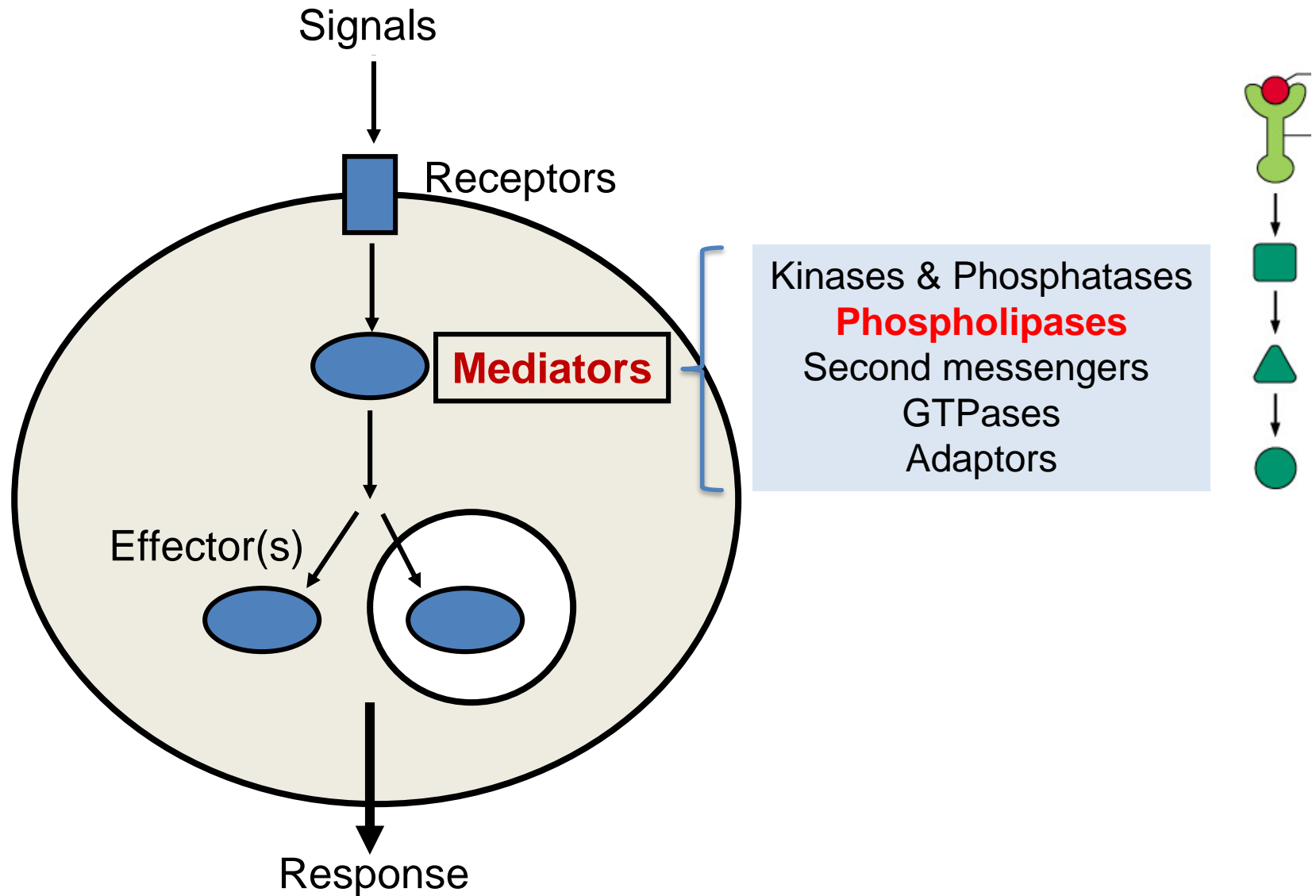
**Ser/Thr Kinases:** PKC, Raf, MAPK, Akt

**Dual-specificity kinases:** MEK, MKK

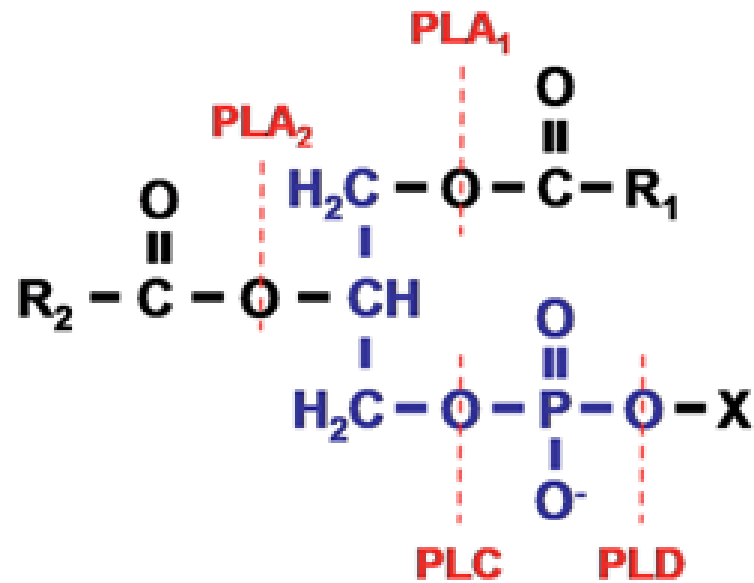
**Lipid Kinase:** PI3K



# Mediators

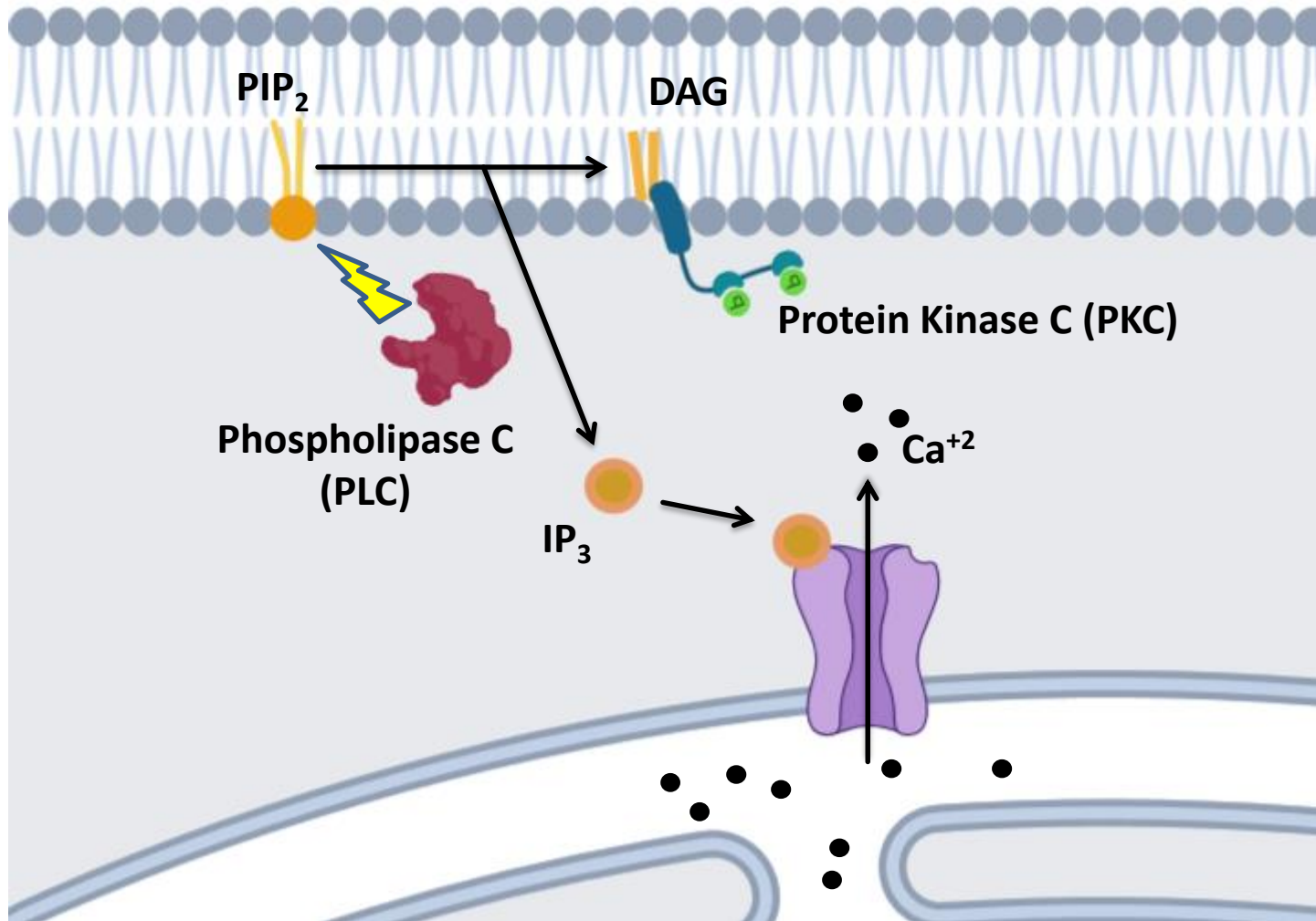


# Phospholipases

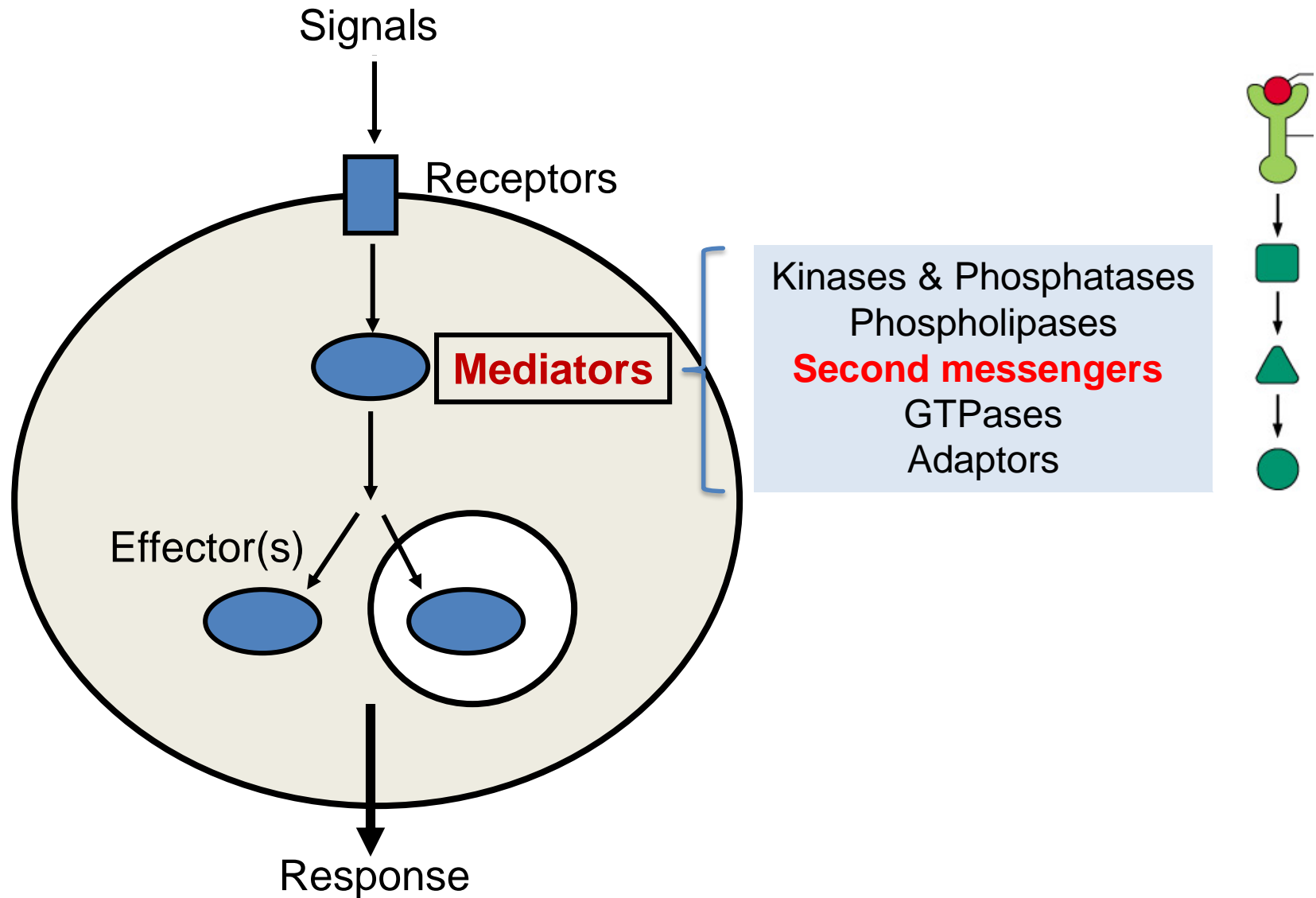


Hydrolyze phospholipids

# Phospholipases

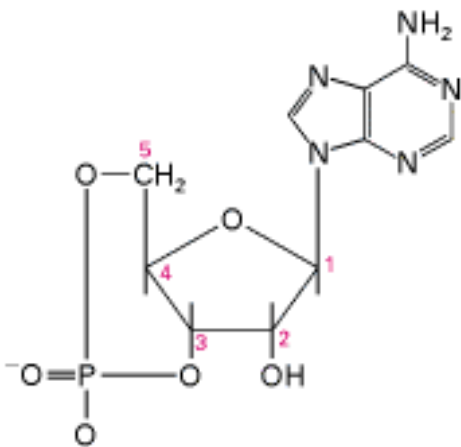


# Mediators

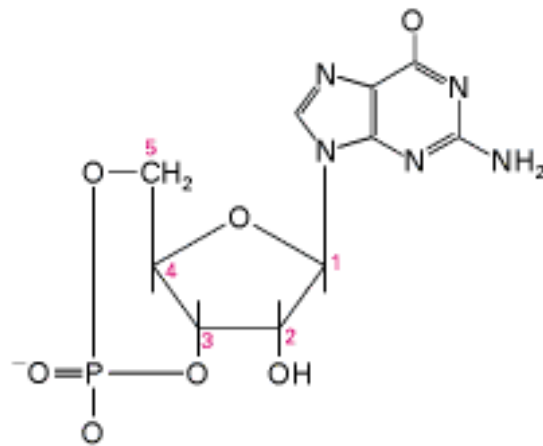


# Second Messengers

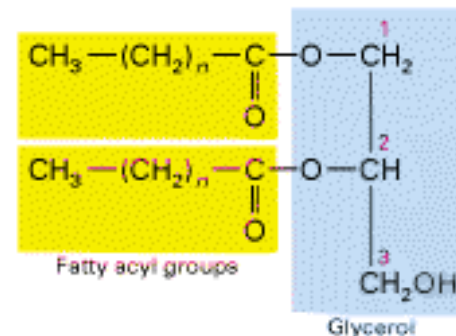
- Cyclic nucleotides
  - Cyclic AMP and cyclic GMP
- Lipid metabolites
  - Diacylglycerol
  - Inositol triphosphate
- Calcium



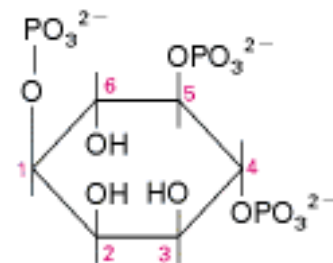
3',5'-Cyclic AMP  
(cAMP)



3',5'-Cyclic GMP  
(cGMP)

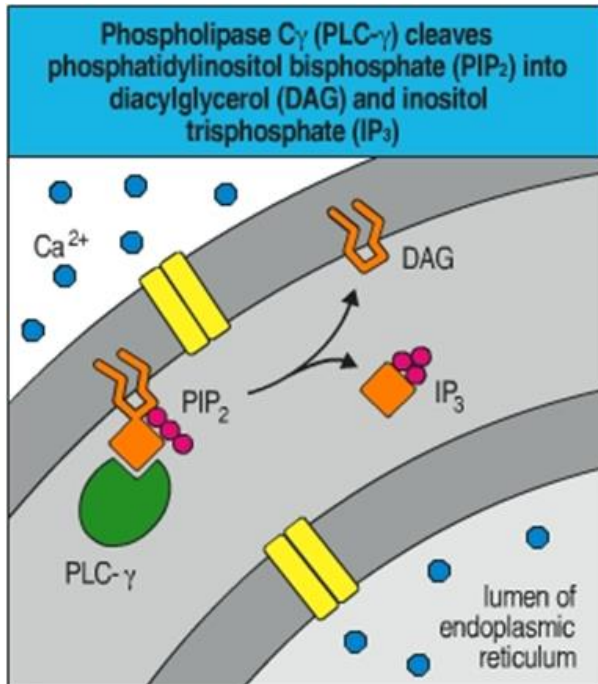


1,2-Diacylglycerol  
(DAG)

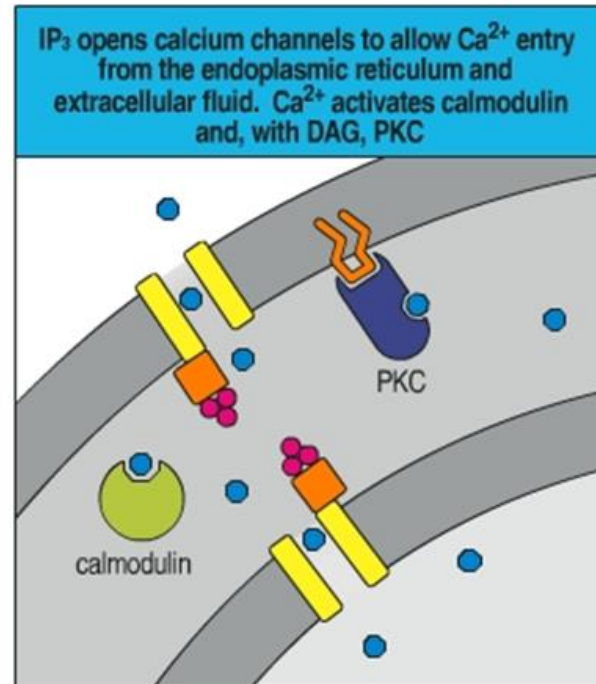


Inositol  
1,4,5-trisphosphate  
(IP<sub>3</sub>)

# Second Messengers



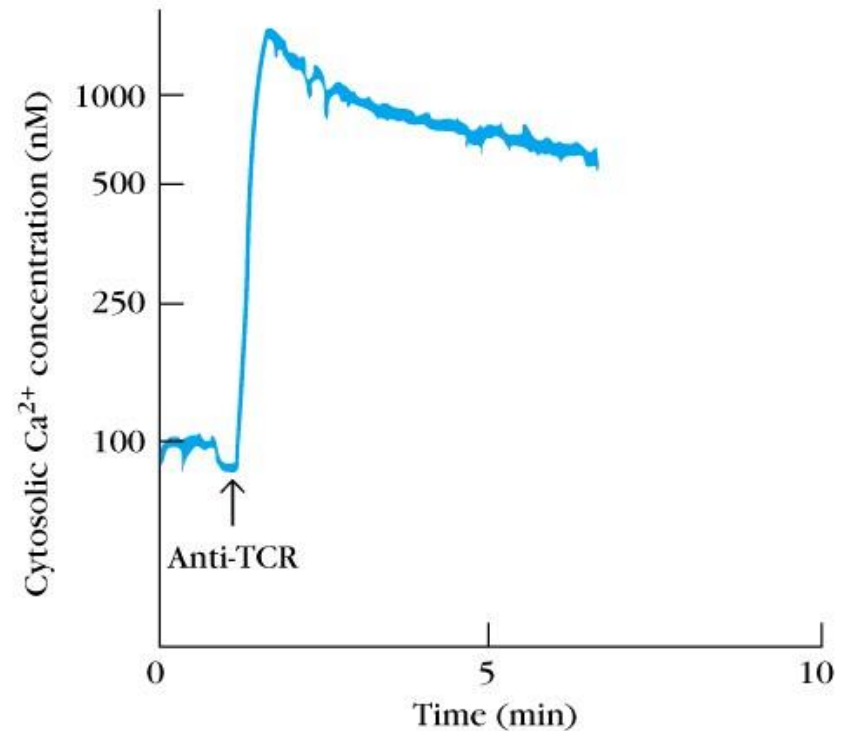
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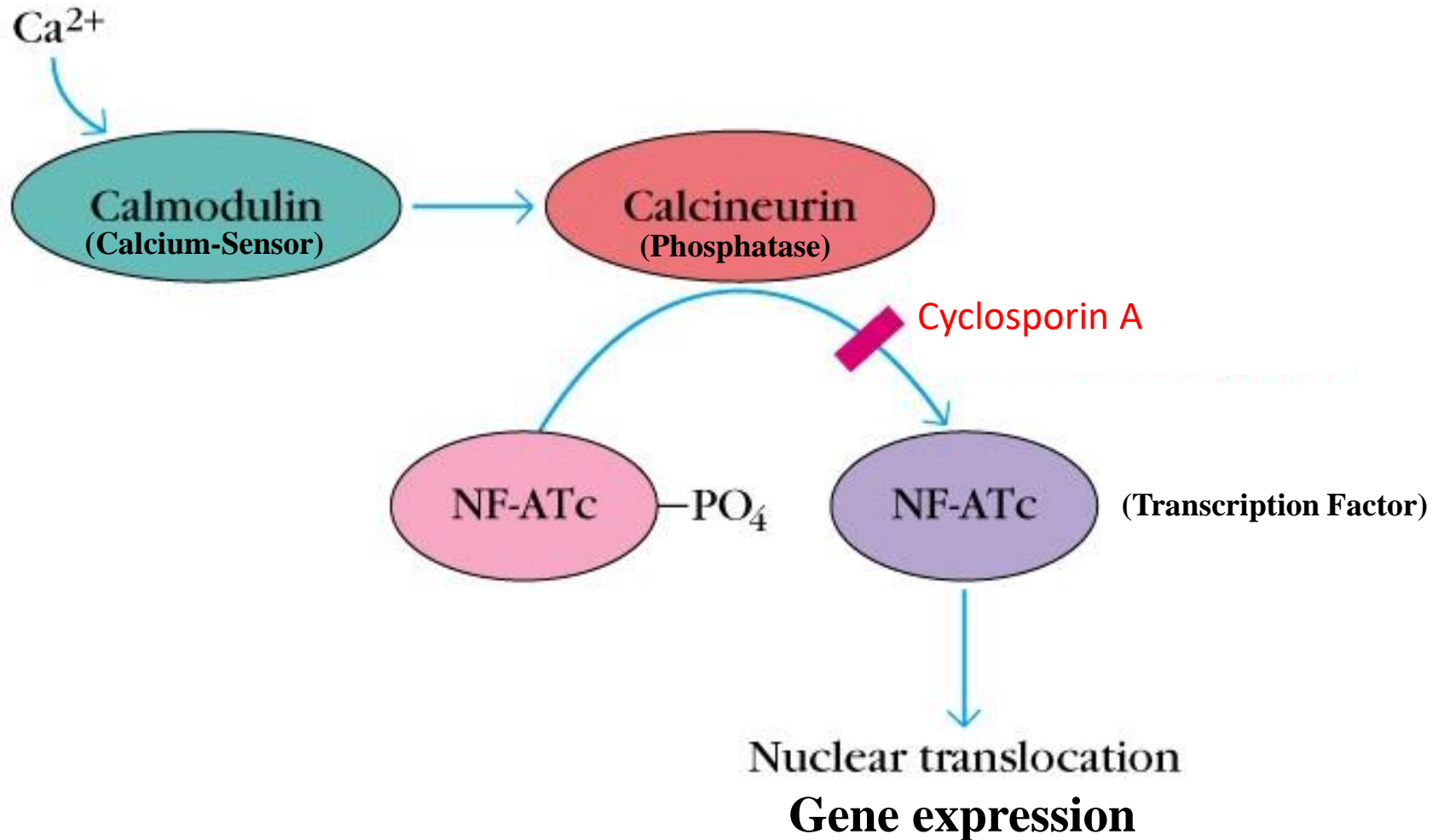
# Calcium

## Cellular calcium concentrations:

- extracellular: 1-2 mM
- cytosolic: 50 - 100 nM
- intracellular lumenal (ER etc.): 30 - 300  $\mu$ M

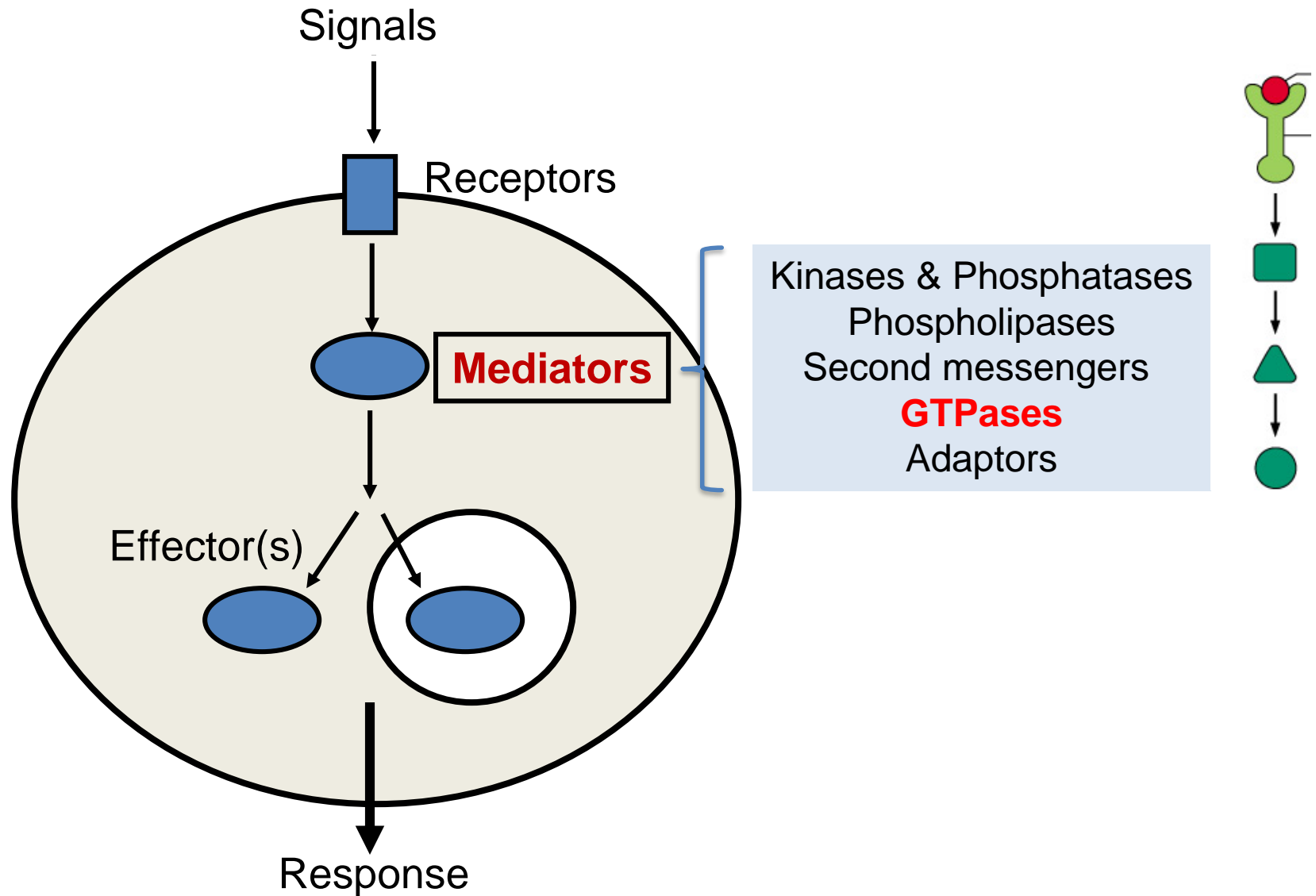


# Calcium

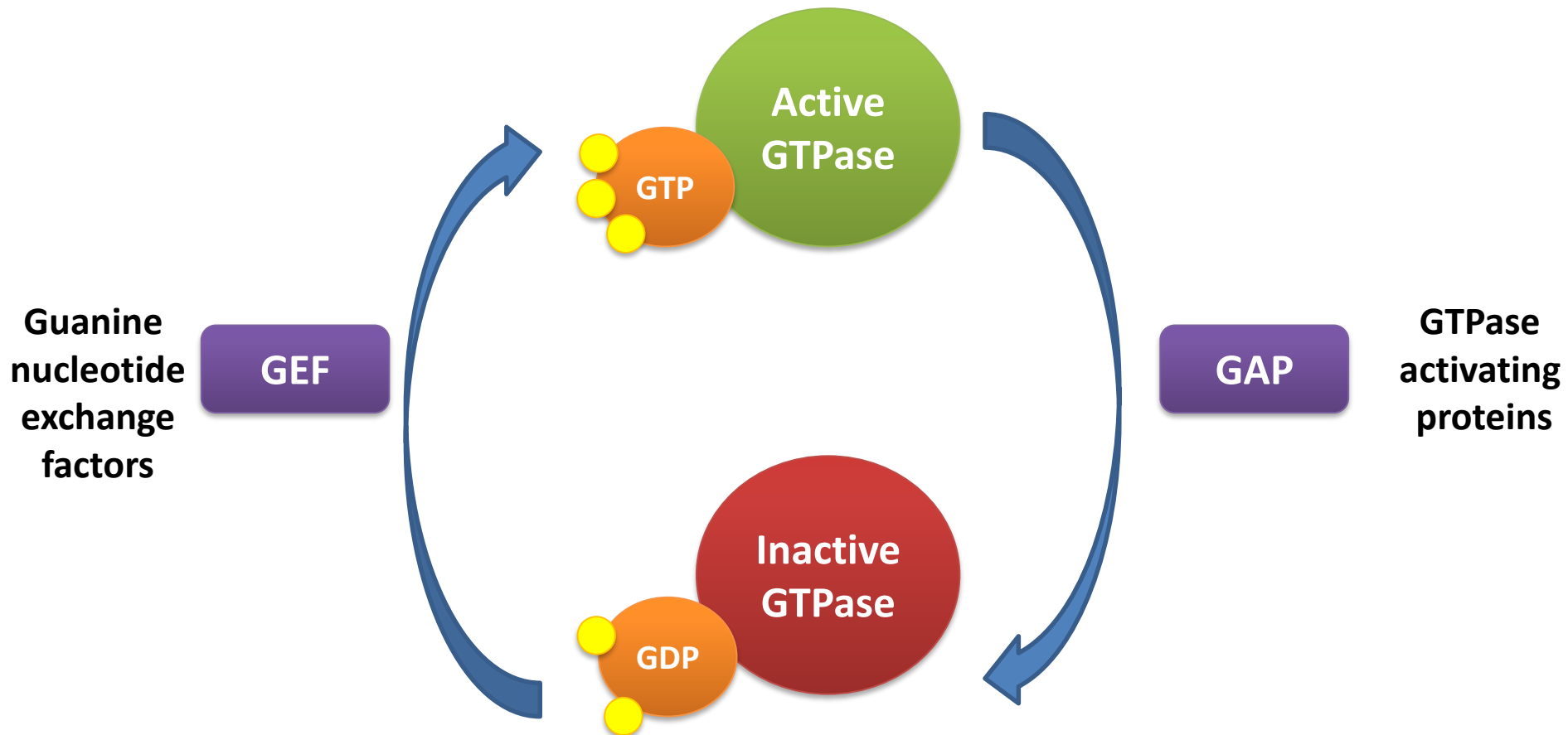




# Mediators



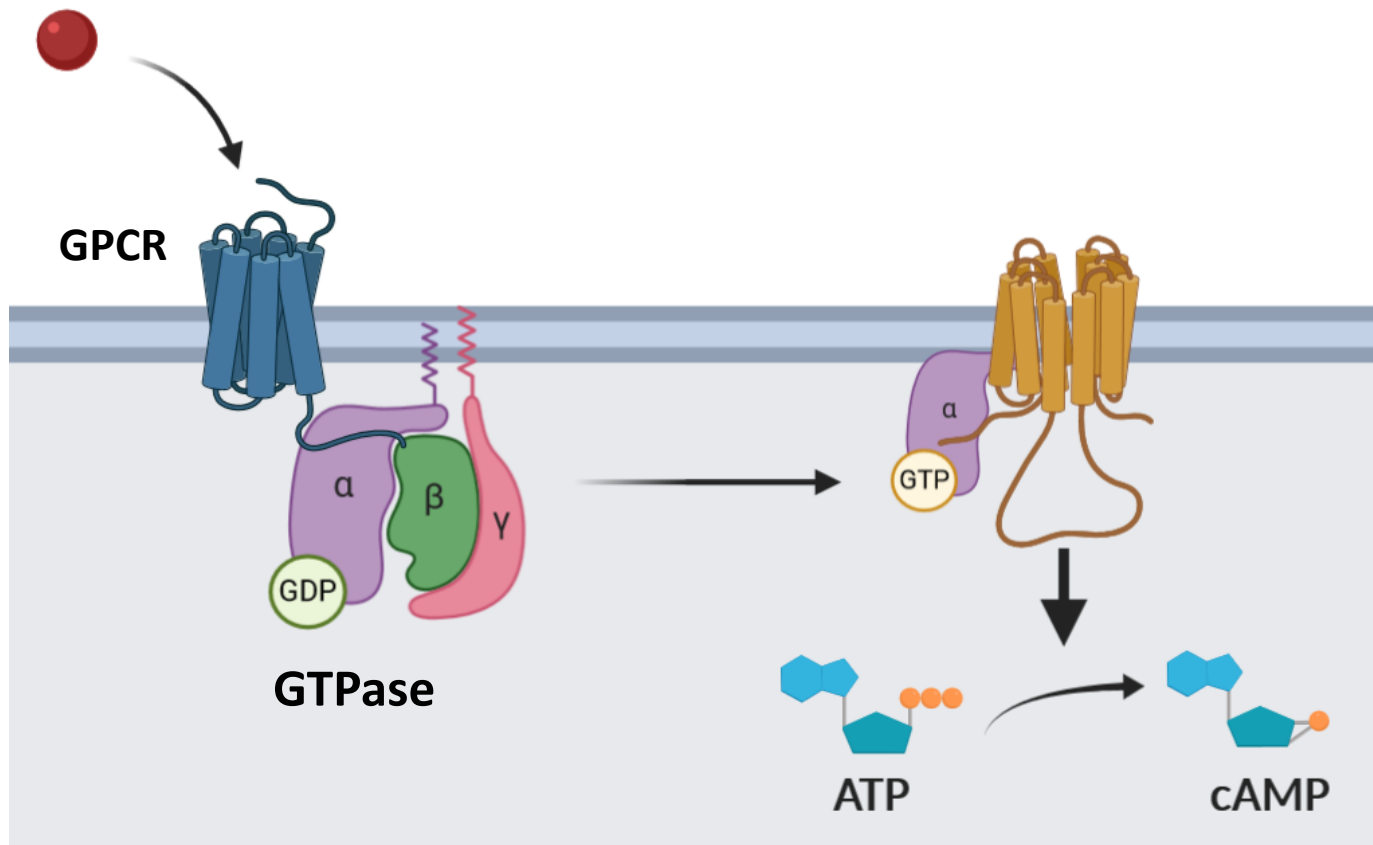
# GTPases



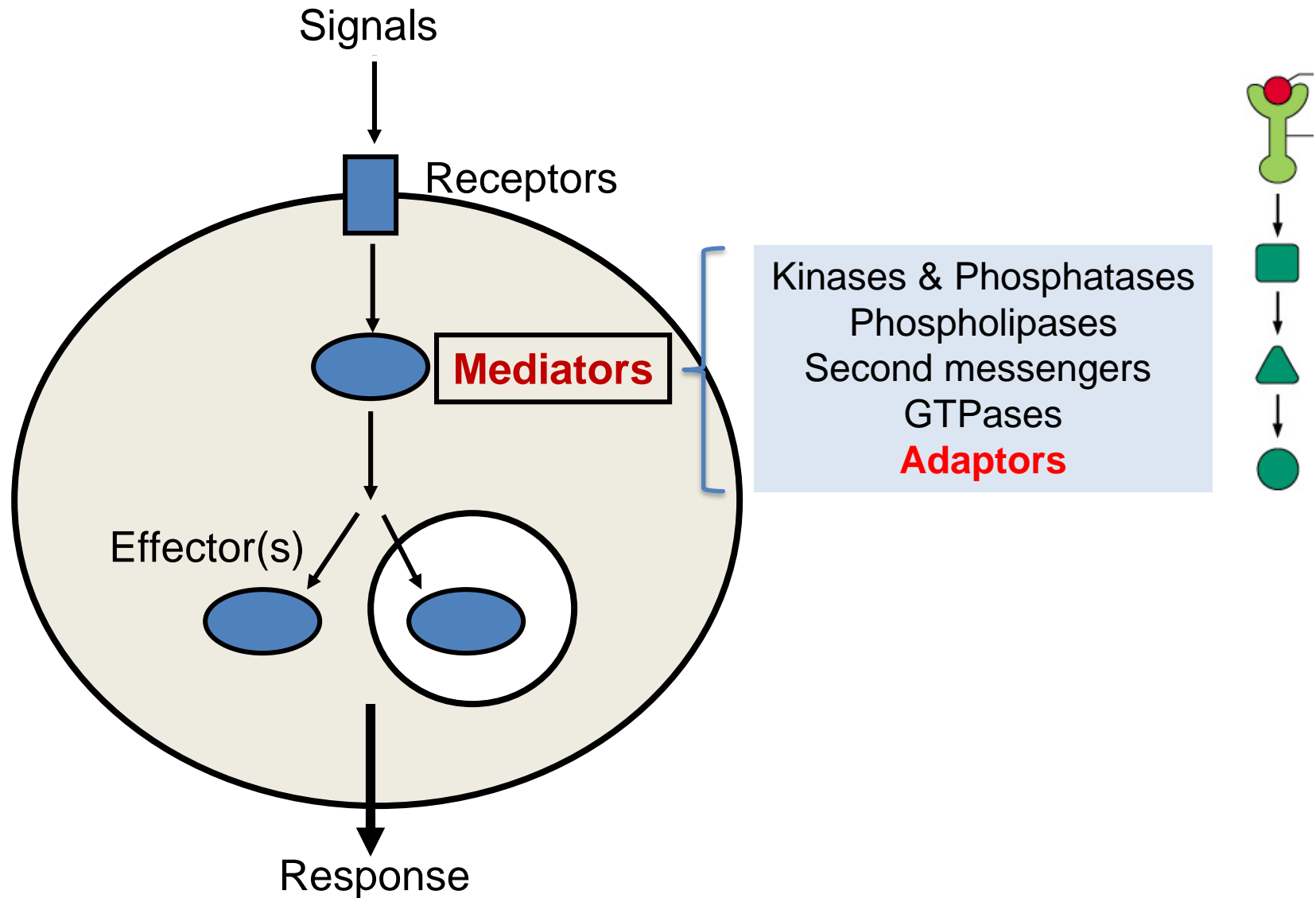
# Small GTPases superfamily

- ***Ras family***: cell proliferation, differentiation and survival.
- ***Rho family***: actin reorganization.
- ***Rab family***: vesicle transport and membrane trafficking in secretory and endocytic pathways.
- ***Ran family***: nucleocytoplasmic transport of RNA and proteins through the nuclear pore.

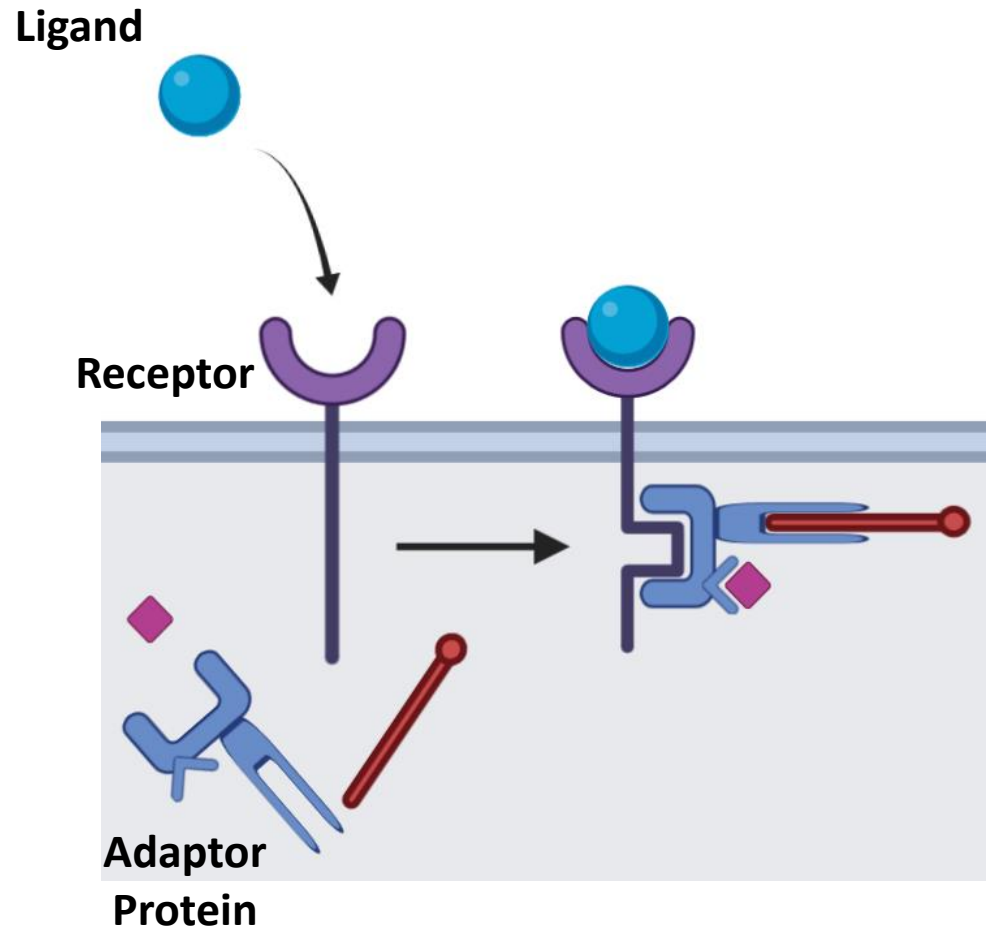
# Heterotrimeric GTPases



# Mediators

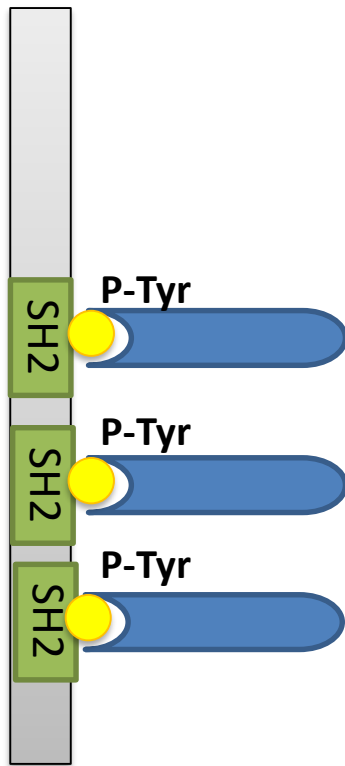


# Adaptor proteins



# Adaptor proteins





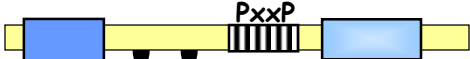







## SH2 Adaptor Proteins



- SH2 domains bind phosphorylated tyrosine residues.
- SH2 domains recruit proteins phosphorylated by tyrosine kinases

# Adaptor proteins



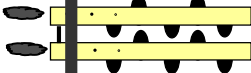
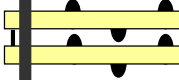


## Cytoplasmic adaptor proteins

Name	Structure	MW (kD)	Interaction partners	Expression
Grb2		28	Sos, LAT, c-Cbl, Shc, SLP-76, Vav, SHP-2, WASP, HPK1	ubiquitous
Grap		28	Sos, LAT, Shc, SAM68	B-Cells, T-Cells
Gads		40	LAT, Shc, SLP-76, HPK1	T-Cells, NK Cells Mast cells. Macrophages, Thrombocytes
Nck-1		47	Sos, SLP-76, WASP, PAK, Cbl	ubiquitous
Shb		55,66	Grb2, LAT, PI3K, Eps8, PLCγ1, CD3ζ, Src	ubiquitous
Shc		46,52,66	Grb2, SHIP, ZAP-70, CD3ζ, Igα/β, RasGAP	ubiquitous
<div>  SH2-Binding Site          SH3-Domain          PTB-Domain          SH2-Domain       </div> <div>  PxxP          SH3-Binding Site       </div>				

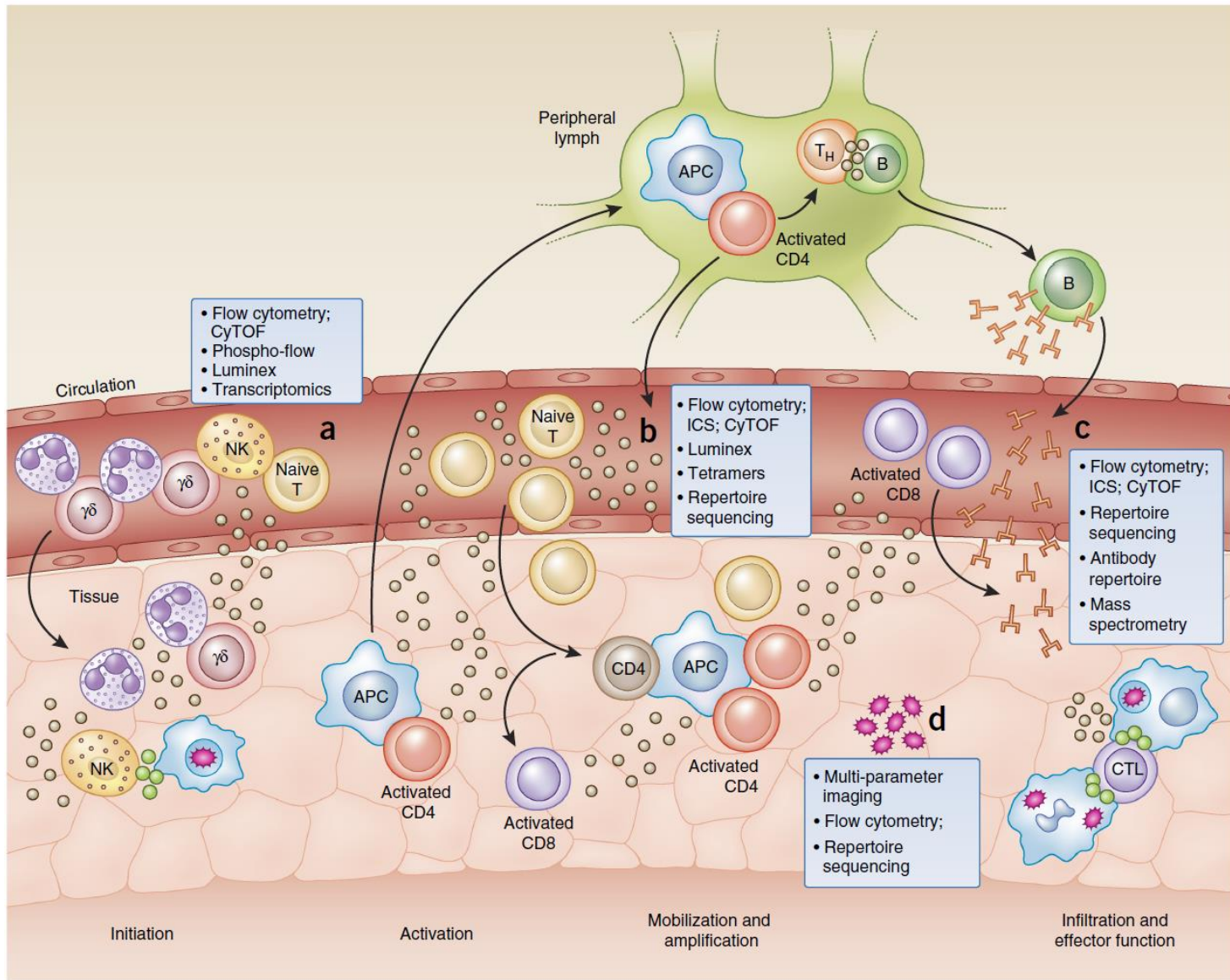


# Adaptor proteins

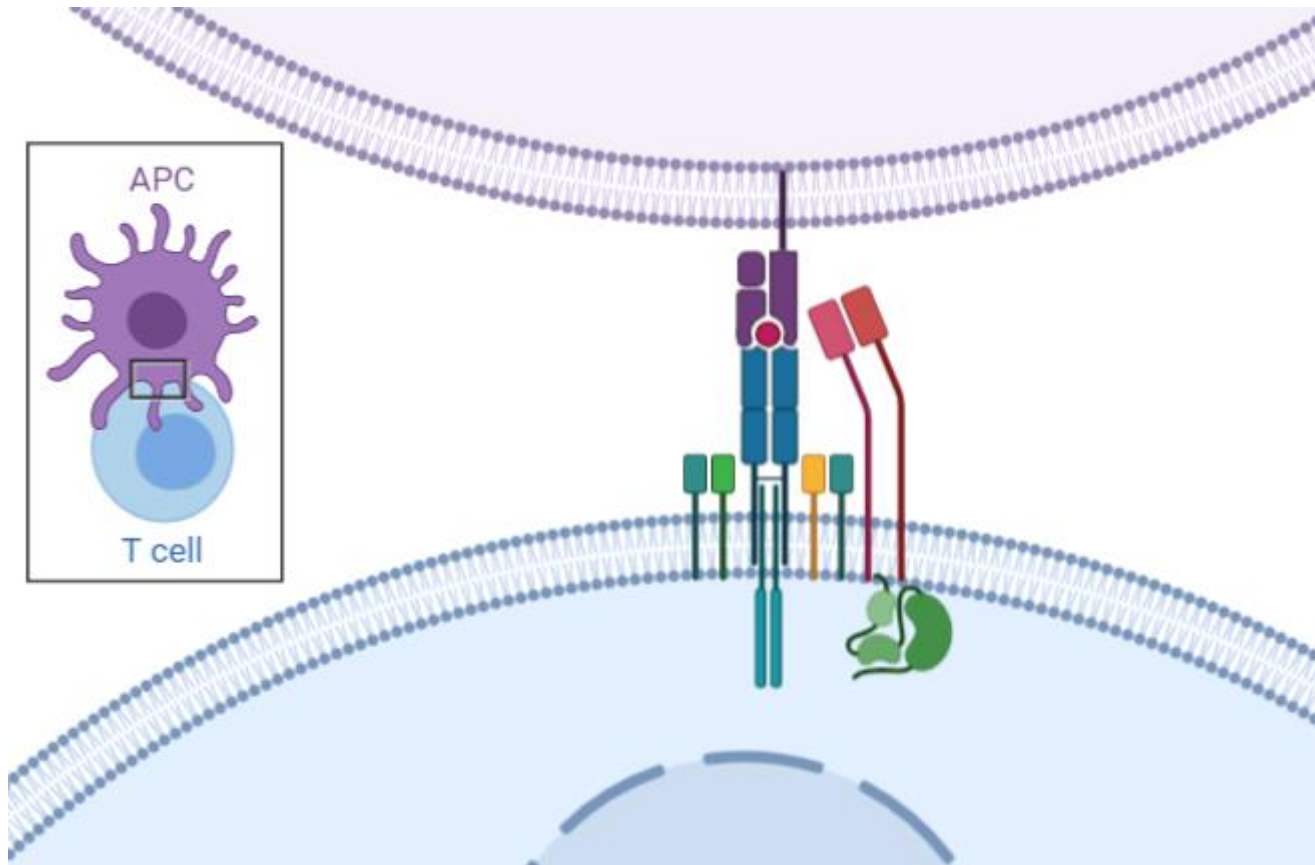
## Transmembrane adaptor proteins

Name	Structure	MW (kD)	Interaction partners	Expression
LAT		36-38	Grb2, Gads, SLP-76, PLC $\gamma$ 1/2, c-Cbl, PI3K	T-Cells, NK Cells, Mast cells, Platelets
PAG/Cbp		75-85	Csk, Fyn	Ubiquitous
SIT		30-40	SHP2	B-Cells, T-Cells
TRIM		29-30	PI3K	T-Cells, NK Cells
<div>  SH2-Binding Site   PxxP SH3-Binding Site </div>				

# T cell receptor (TCR) signaling

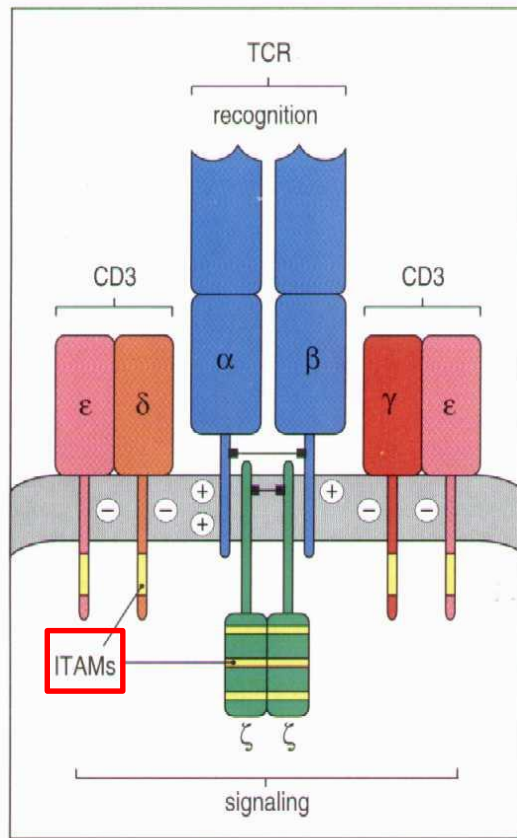


# Signal transduction induced by T cell receptor engagement



# TCR structure

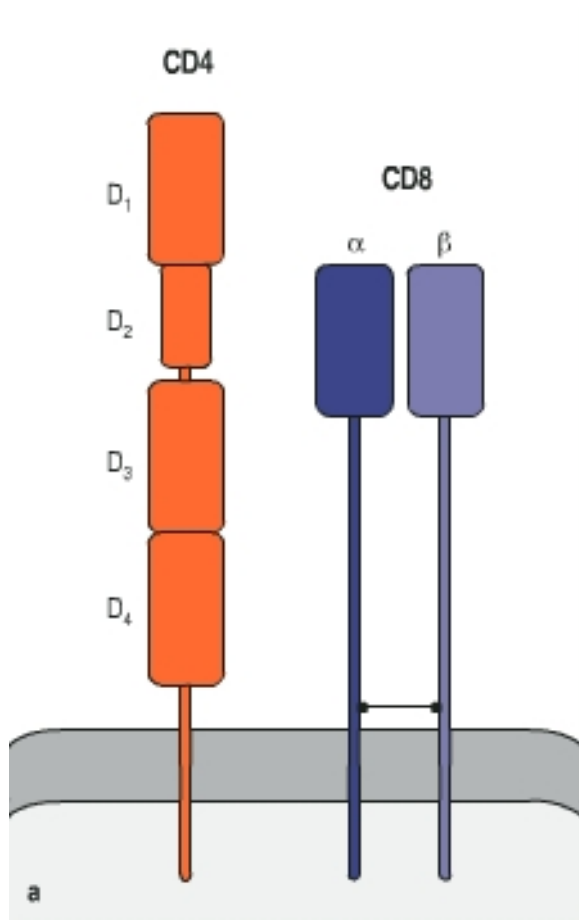
# T cell receptor:CD3 complex



- T cell receptor
  - $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  chain heterodimer
  - antigen recognition
- CD3
  - transmembrane proteins with extracellular domains and cytoplasmic tails
    - two  $\epsilon$ -chains
    - one  $\delta$ -chain
    - one  $\gamma$ -chain
  - transmembrane/cytoplasmic  $\zeta$ -homodimers

ITAM: immunoreceptor tyrosine-based activation motifs

# Co-Receptors of the TCR



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- CD4 and CD8 recognize invariant amino acids on MHCII and MHCI, respectively.
- CD4 and CD8 are constitutively associated with **Lck** (Tyr-kinase)
- CD4/CD8 concentrate **Lck** at the site of TCR-MHC interaction

Co-receptors function: increasing efficiency of lymphocyte activation

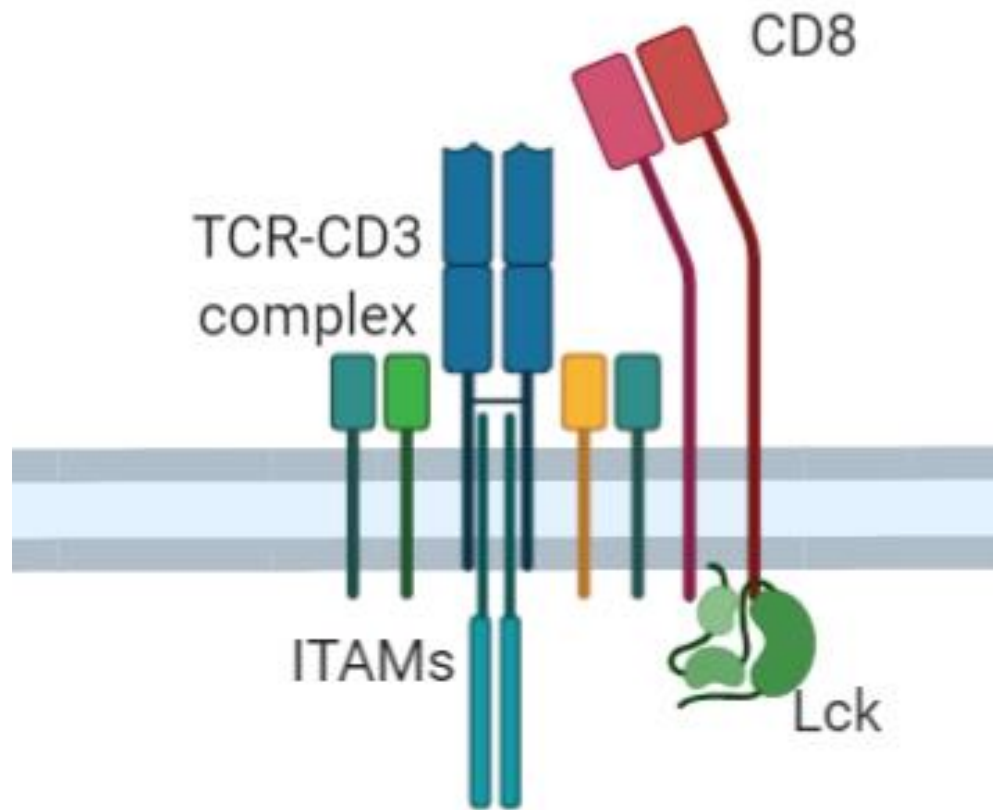
# Lipid Rafts

- Membrane compartments enriched with cholesterol, glycosphingolipids and sphingomyelin
- Selectively concentrate membrane proteins with lipid anchor of saturated acyl chains
- Contain lipid modified signal proteins
  - Src kinases (Lck, Fyn)
  - GTPases (Ras proteins, G-proteins)
  - Adaptor proteins (LAT)

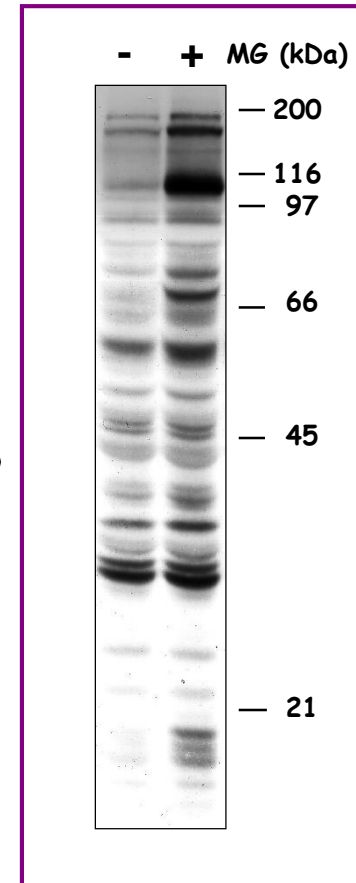
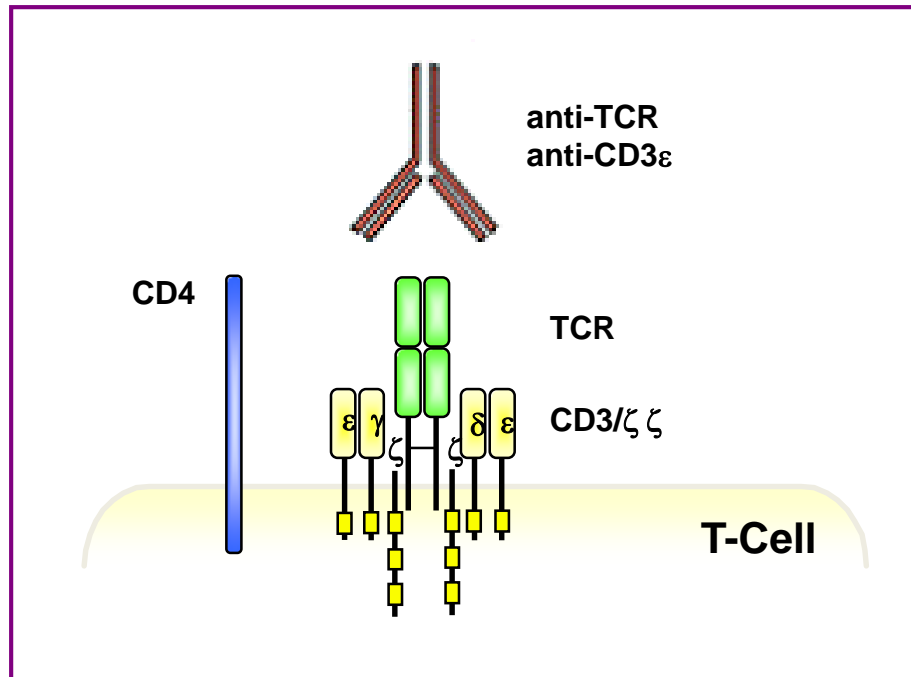


# TCR signaling

# Inactive TCR

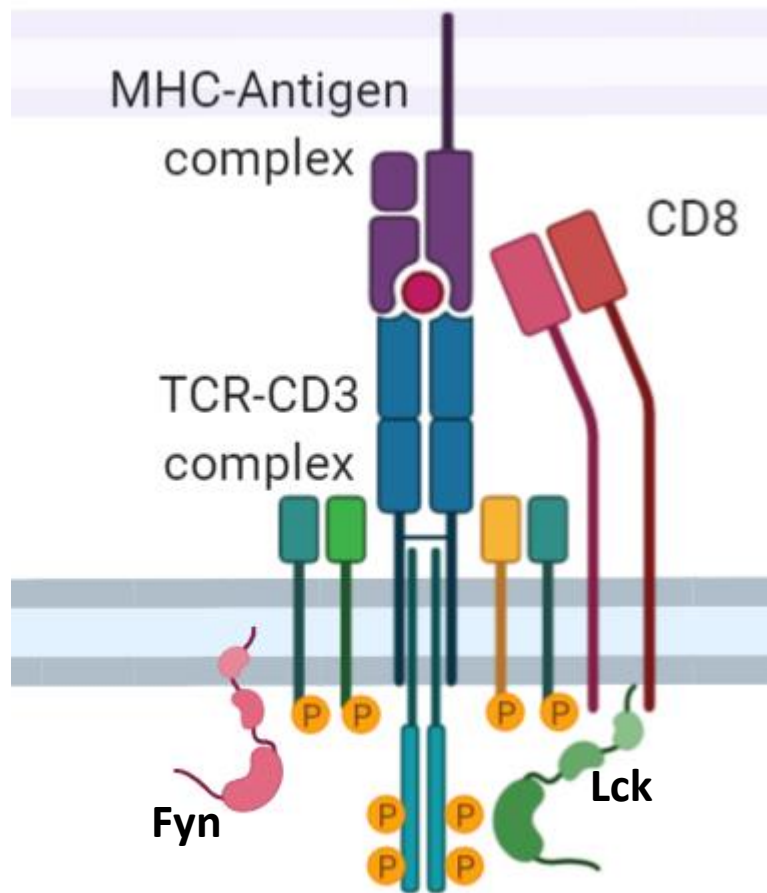


# Induction of a tyrosine phosphorylation wave



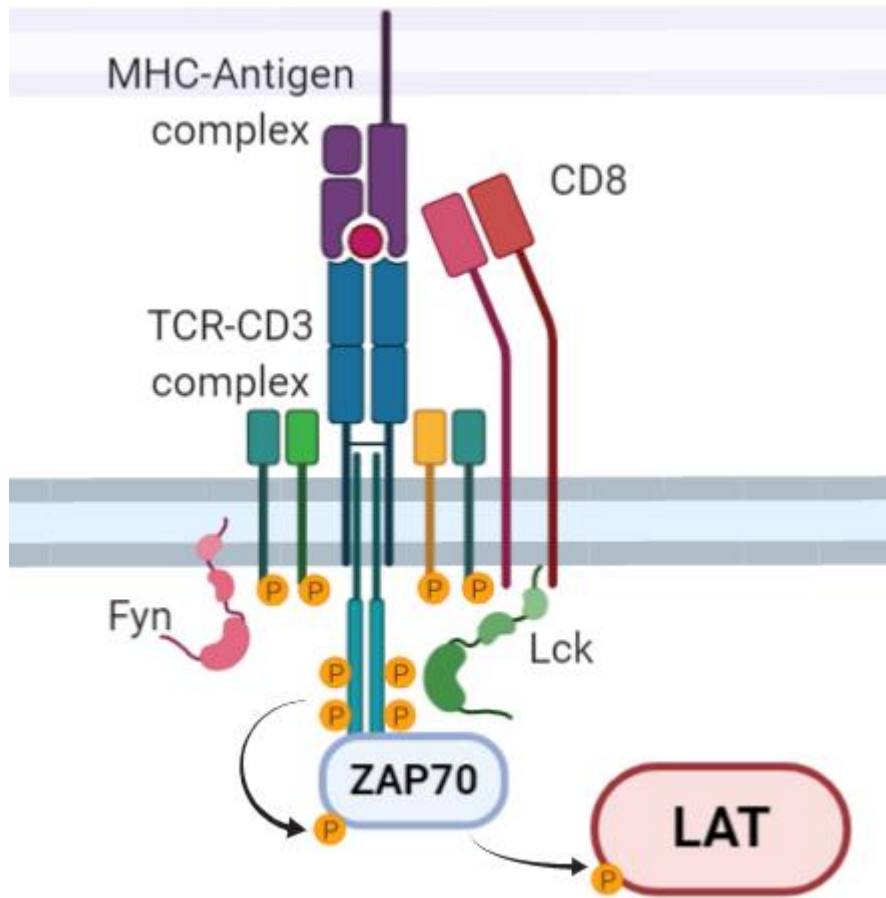
anti-pTyr WB  
(4G10)

# ITAMs phosphorylation



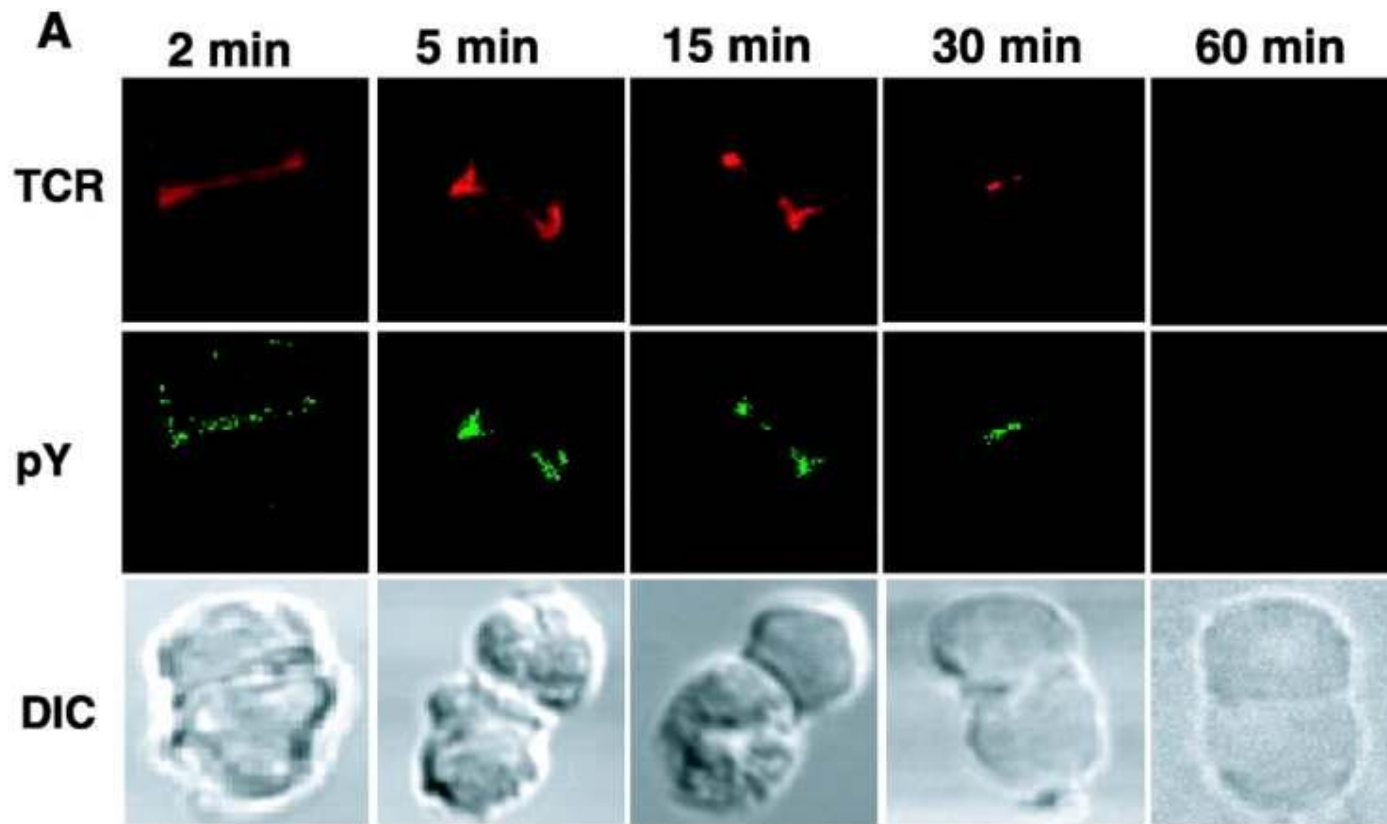
- Recruitment and activation of Lck and Fyn (Src-family tyrosine kinases)
- Lck and Fyn phosphorylate ITAMs of TCR-CD3 complex

# ZAP70 and LAT

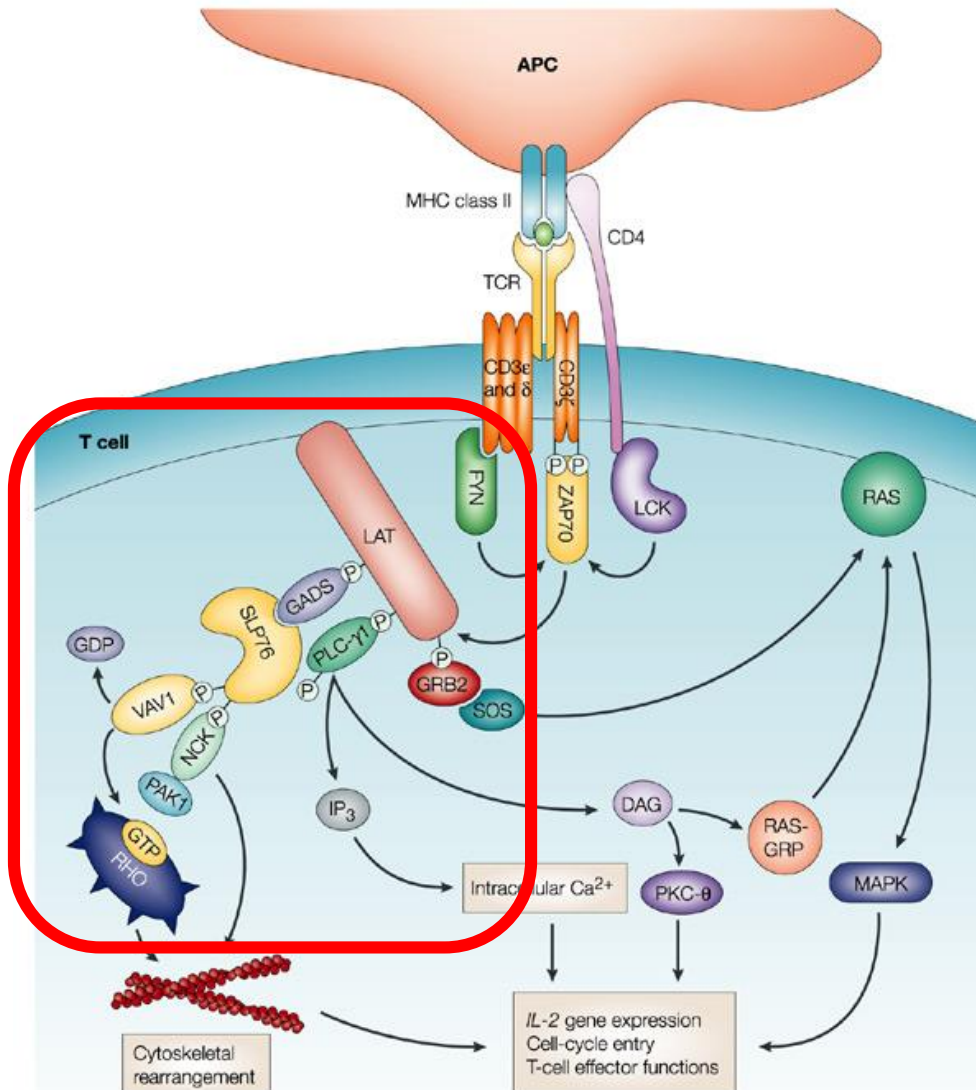


- Recruitment and phosphorylation of ZAP70 (Tyr-kinase)
- Recruitment of and phosphorylation of LAT (adaptor protein)

# Time course of pTyr migration in T cell:APC conjugates



# LAT complex

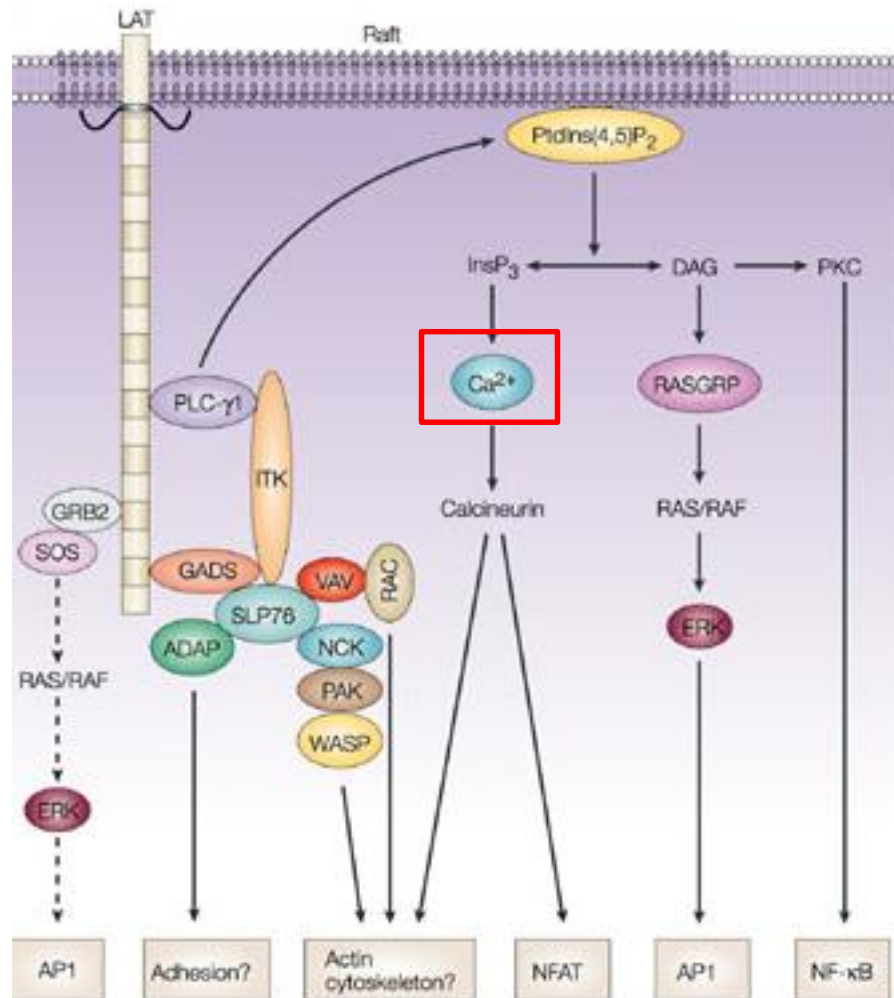


- LAT phosphorylation triggers the formation of multi-protein signaling complexes.

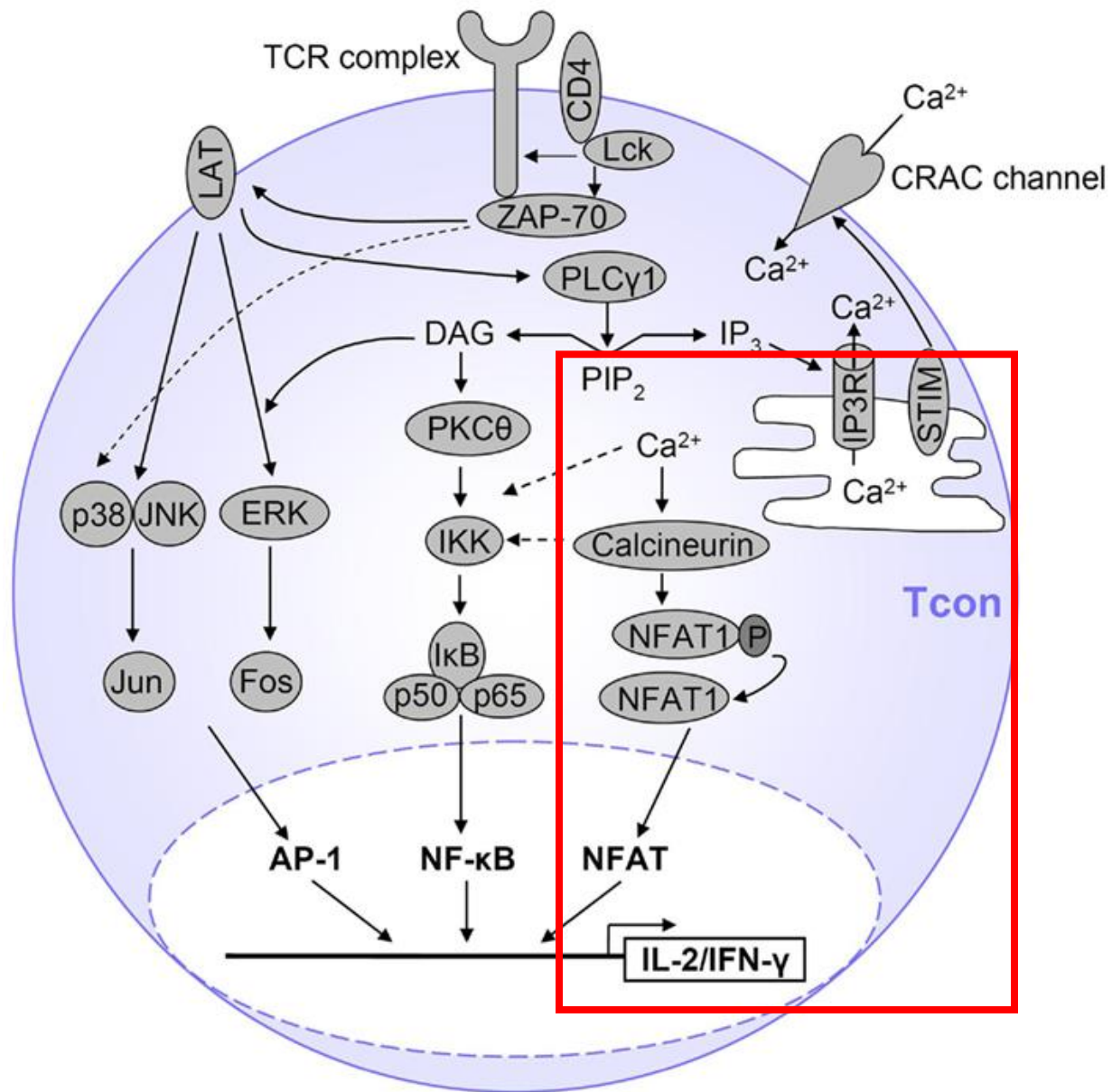
LAT complex include:

- Adaptor proteins
  - (SLP-76, Grb-2, and Gads)
- SLP-76 recruits Nck, Vav, and Itk to the LAT complex
- Grb-2 recruits SOS
- Phospholipase C (PLC) γ1

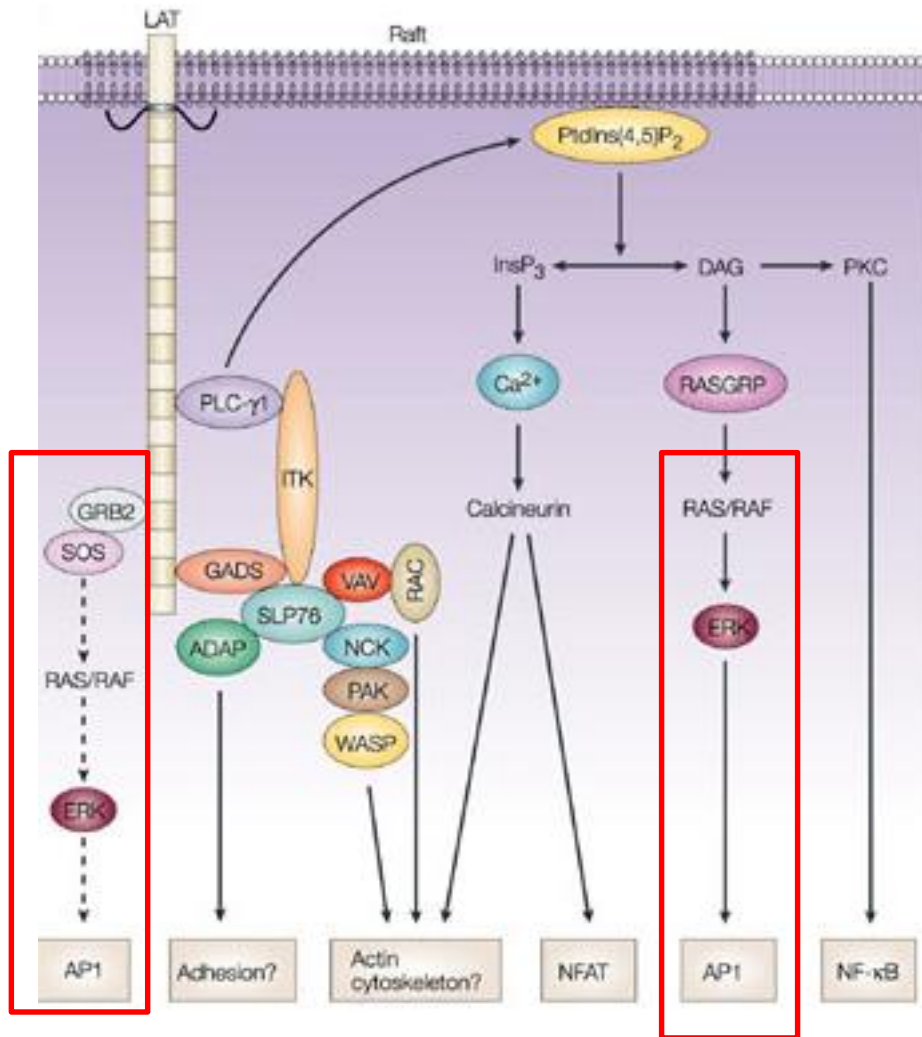
# Calcium-NFAT signaling

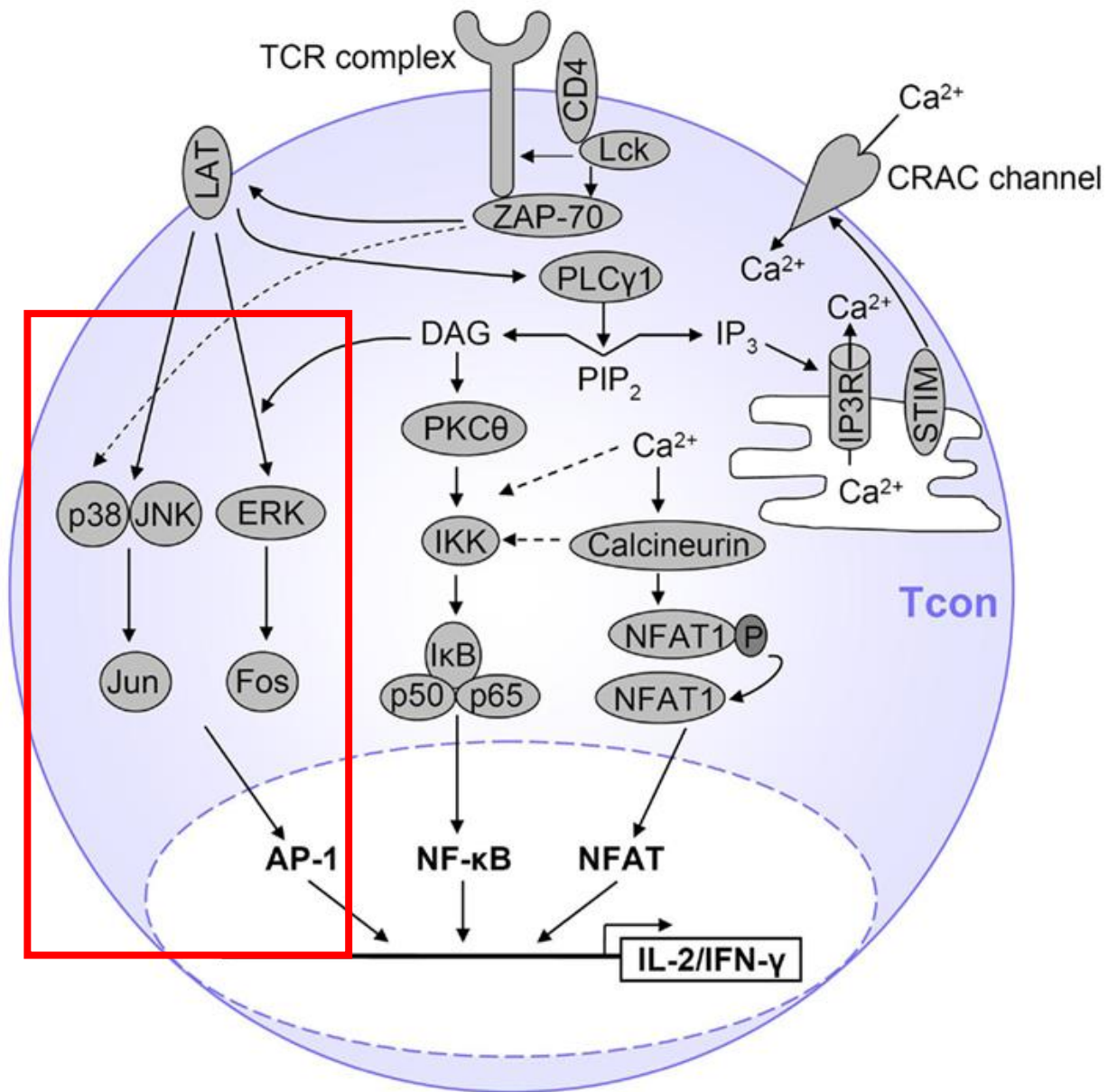




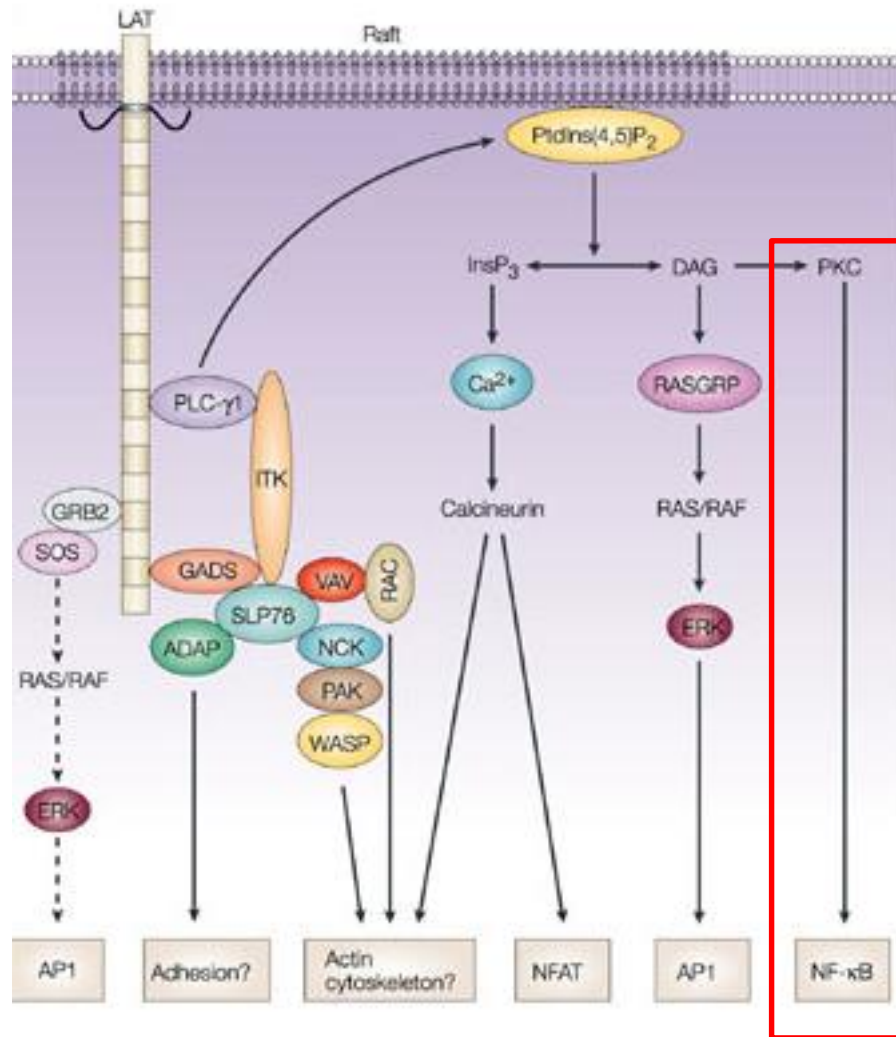


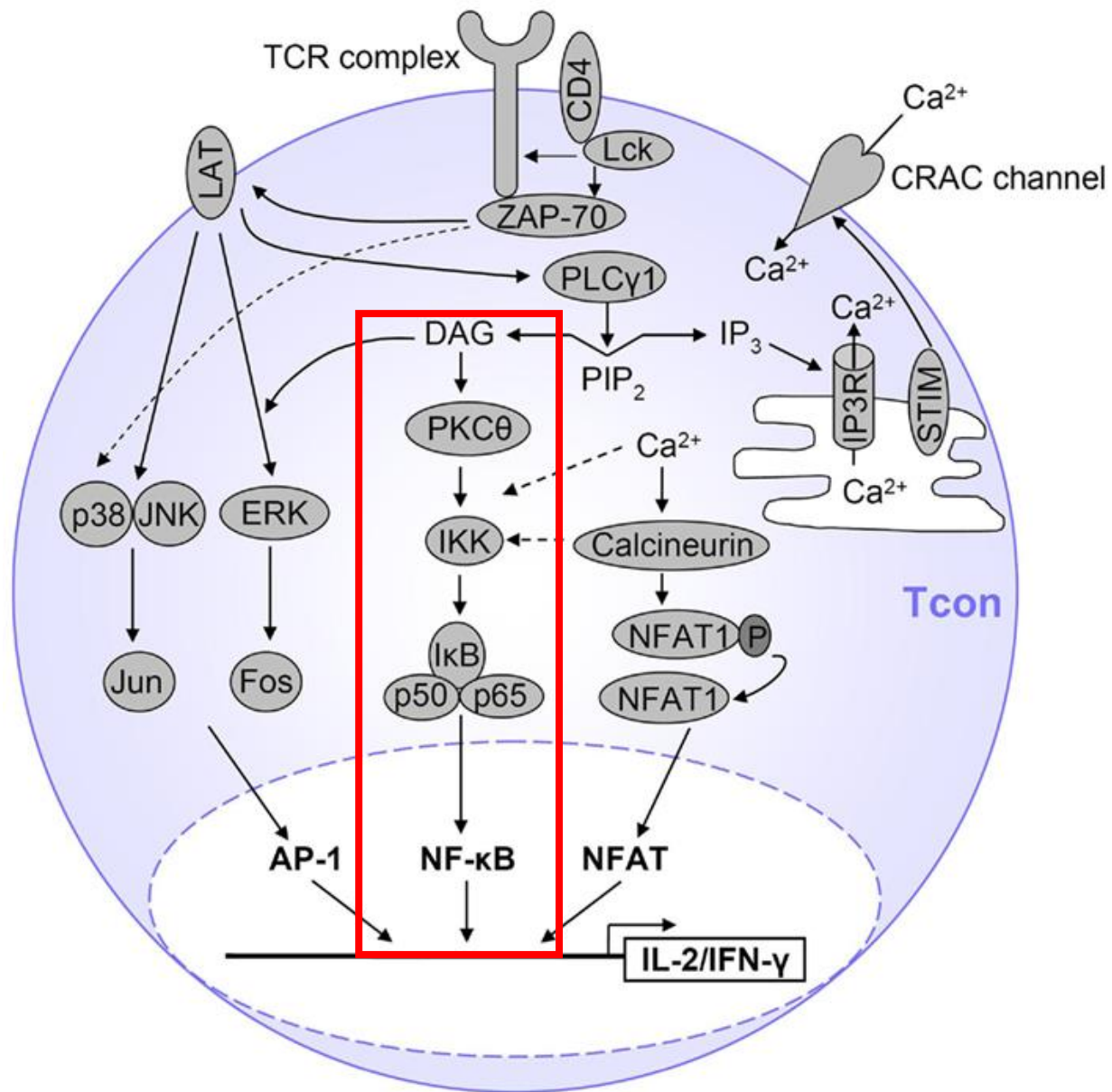
# AP-1 pathway activation



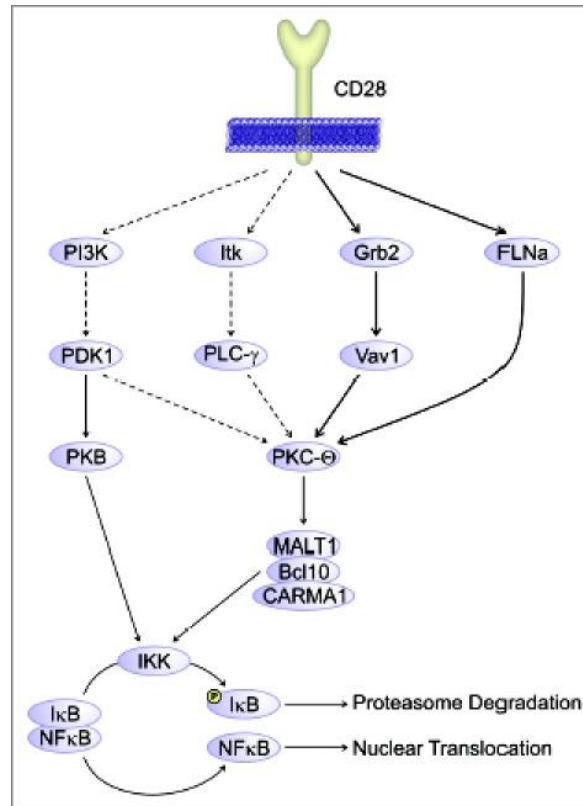
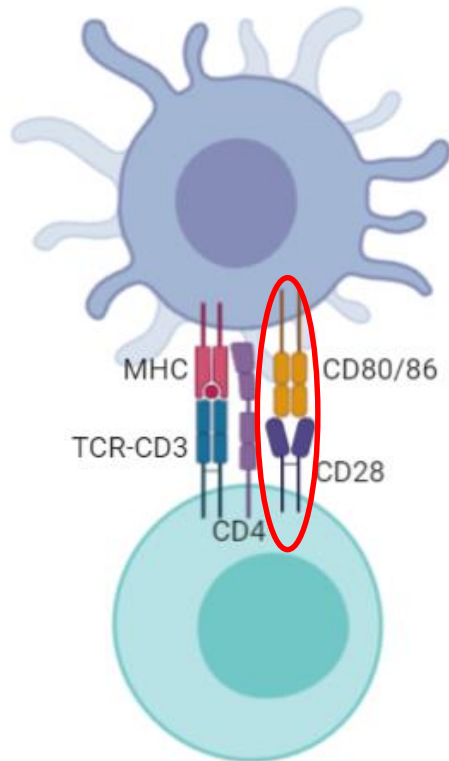


# NF- $\kappa$ B pathway activation





# CD28 costimulation



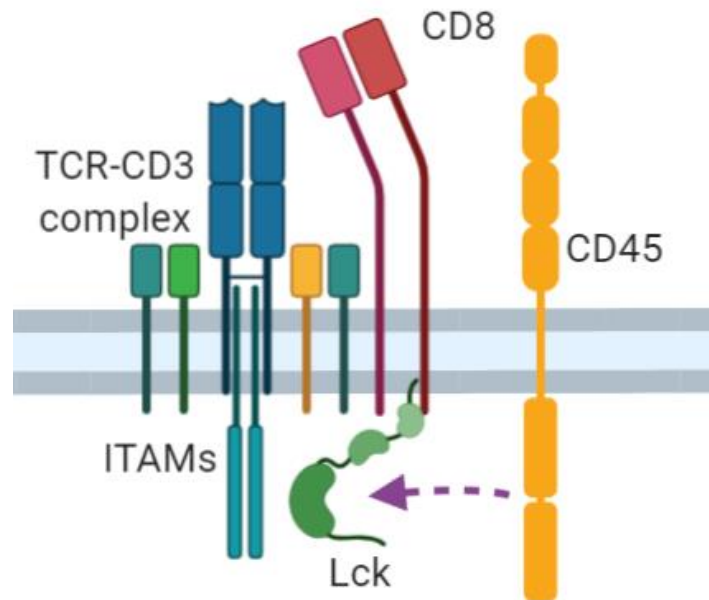
Riha P, Rudd CE. 2010

- CD28 stimulation is necessary to induce T cell activation
- CD28 stimulation potentiates TCR signaling and triggers NF-κB activation

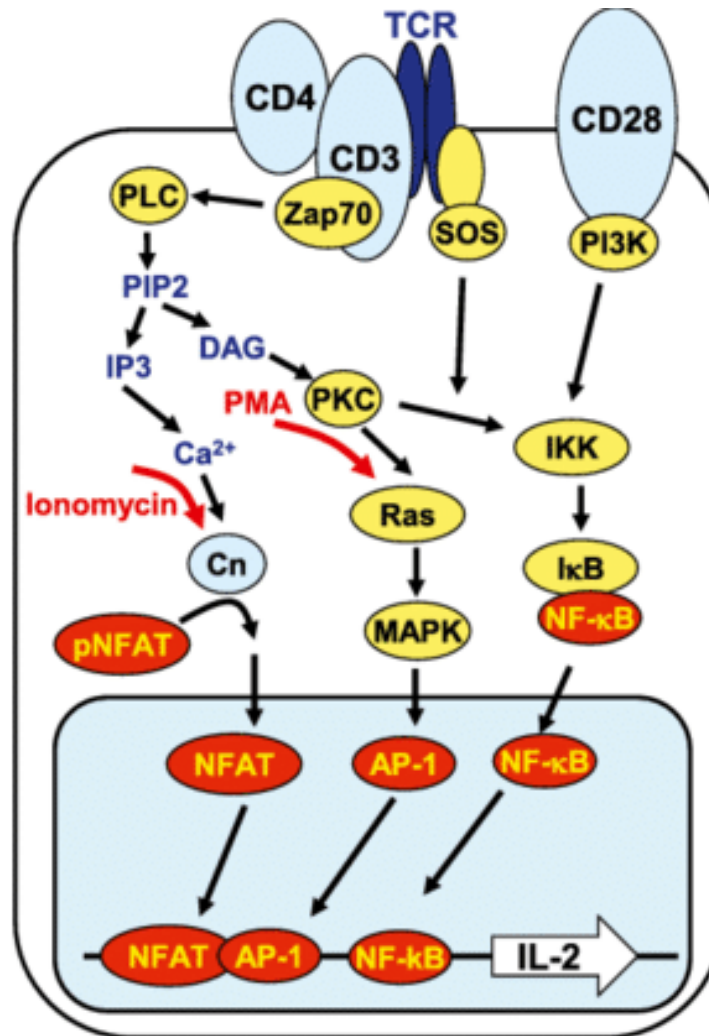


# CD45

- CD45 tyrosine phosphatase promotes Lck activity by dephosphorylating the negative regulatory carboxy-terminal tyrosine on Lck, maintaining Lck in an open active configuration.



# PMA / Ionomycin



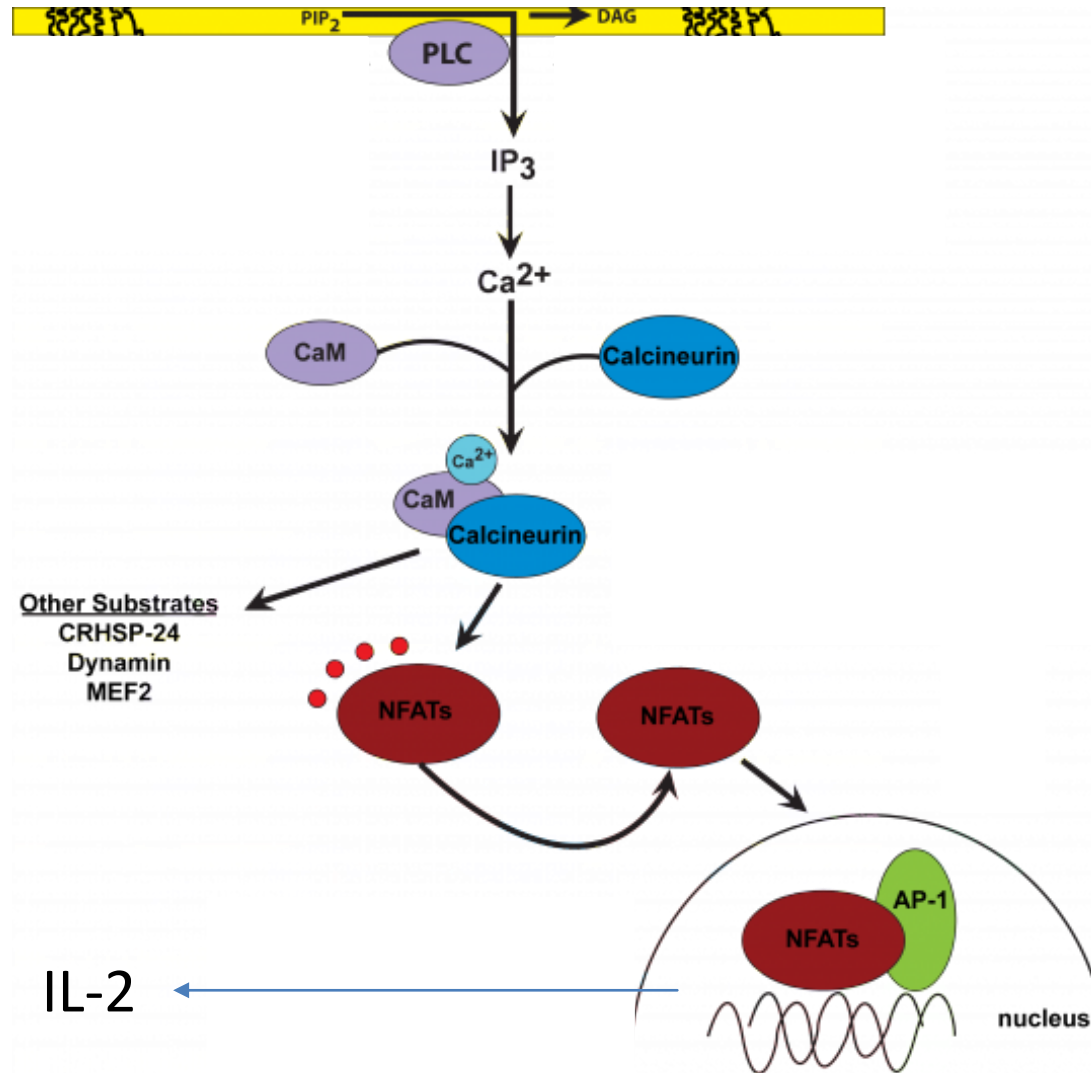


# TCR dysregulation

- CD45 misexpression: immune deficiency or autoimmunity
- CD45 polymorphisms: Multiple sclerosis
- CD3 mutations: Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID)
- CD3 $\zeta$  reduced expression: Rheumatoid arthritis and SLE
- ZAP-70 absence: T cell development blocked at DP (CD4+ CD8+) stage in thymus. Complete absence of CD4+ and CD8+ cells
- ZAP-70 mutation: Absence of CD8+ T cells and functionally impaired CD4+ Tcells
- Mutations of SH3 domain in ZAP-70: Rheumatoid arthritis
- Mutations in TCR signaling components: T cell malignancies

# NFAT signaling pathway

# NFAT (nuclear factor of activated T cells) pathway

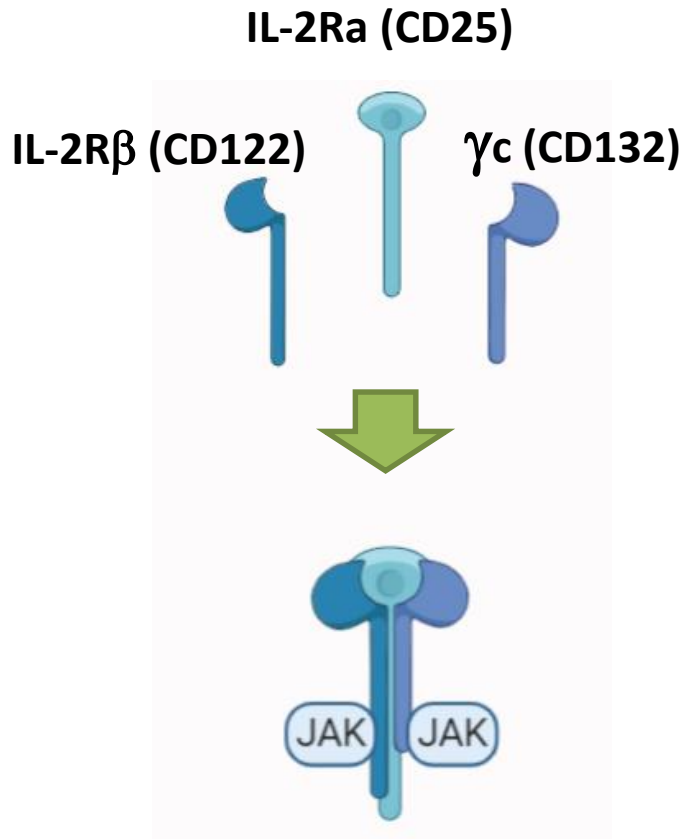


# IL-2R signaling pathway

## IL-2R signaling pathway

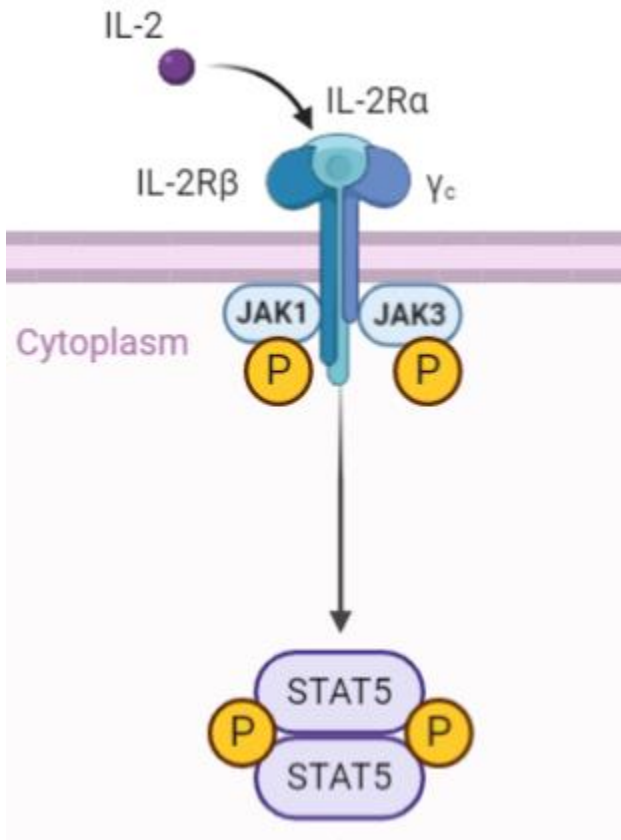
- IL-2 promotes T cell survival and differentiation.
- JAK/STAT signaling pathway:
  - JAK: Janus Kinase (JAK1, JAK2, JAK3, TYK2)
    - Tyrosine kinase activity
    - SH2 domain
  - STAT: Signal Transducer and Activators of Transcription
    - Transcription factor

# IL-2 receptor (IL-2R)



- Trimeric receptor:
  - $\alpha$  chain: increases receptor affinity
  - $\beta$  chain and  $\gamma_c$  subunit: couple to JAK

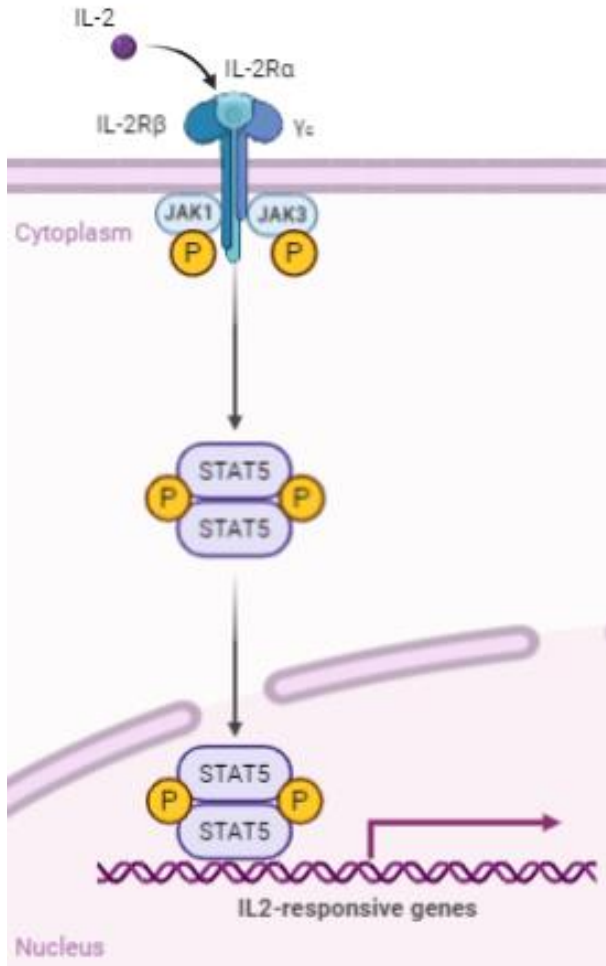
# JAK/STAT signaling



IL-2R $\beta$  chain - JAK1  
 $\gamma_c$  subunit - JAK3

- JAK activation results in IL-2R $\beta$  and  $\gamma_c$  subunit phosphorylation
- Tyrosine phosphorylation permits the recruitment of STAT5A, STAT5B, and STAT3

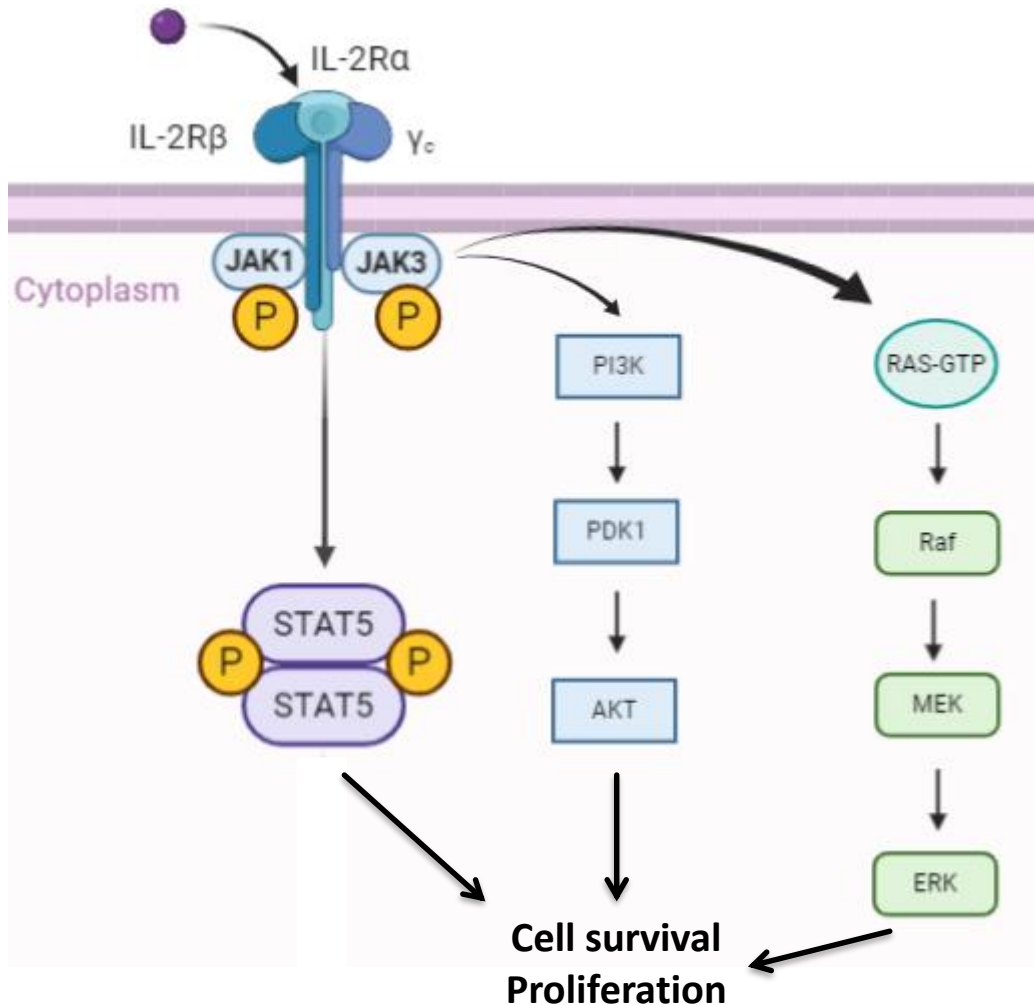
# JAK/STAT signaling



- Tyrosine phosphorylation of STAT induces dimerization, nuclear translocation, and STAT-mediated transcription.



# IL-2R signal transduction



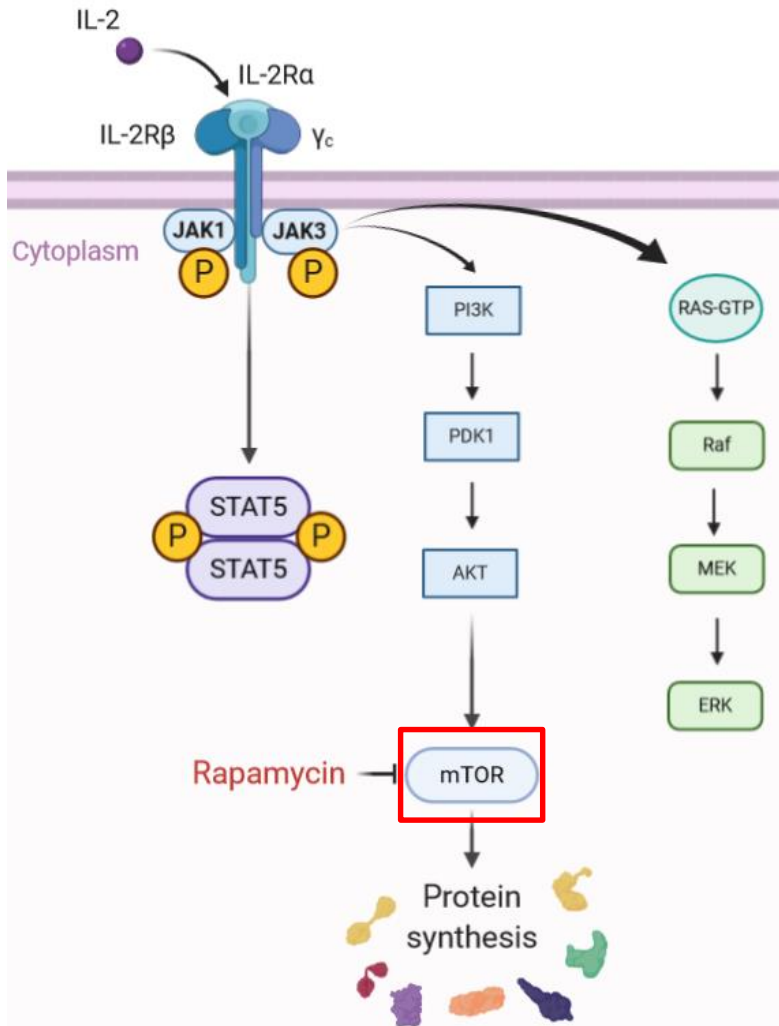
IL-2R:

– STAT phosphorylation

– Activation of:

- PI3K/AKT pathway
- MAPK cascade

# Immunosuppression via IL-2R signaling inhibition



- IL-2R signaling promotes protein synthesis via mTOR activation
- mTOR inhibitor Rapamycin blocks cell cycle progression in IL-2 stimulated T cells

## IL-2R dysregulation

- IL-2 $\alpha$  chain mutations: Decrease numbers of peripheral T cells. Extensive lymphocytic infiltration of tissues. Severe Combined Immuno Deficiency-like (SCID-like) features and overwhelming autoimmunity.
- IL-2R $\beta$  chain mutations: Severe immune dysregulation autoantibodies, hypergammaglobulinemia, bowel inflammation, dermatological abnormalities, lymphadenopathy.
- IL-2R $\gamma$  chain deletion: Absence of peripheral T cells. X-linked severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID)

Thank you for your attention!

*Questions?*

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