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Title: Structural Basis and Functional Implications of the Membrane Pore-Formation Mechanisms of

Bacterial Pore-Forming Toxins

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Keywords: Pore-forming toxin

Cholesterol-dependent cytolysin

Oligomerization Membrane

Issue Date: 2018

Publisher: Springer New York LLC

Citation: Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology, 1112, pp. 281-291

Abstract: Pore-forming toxins (PFTs) are a distinct class of membrane-damaging protein toxins documented

in a wide array of life forms ranging from bacteria to humans. PFTs are known to act as potent virulence factors of the bacterial pathogens. Bacterial PFTs are, in general, secreted as water-soluble molecules, which upon encountering target host cells assemble into transmembrane oligomeric pores, thus leading to membrane permeabilization and cell death. Interaction of the PFTs with the target host cells can also lead to plethora of cellular responses having critical implications for the bacterial pathogenesis processes, host-pathogen interactions, and host immunity. In this review, we present an overview of our current understanding of the structural aspects of the membrane pore-formation processes employed by the bacterial PFTs. We also discuss the functional implications of the PFT mode of actions, in terms of eliciting diverse cellular

responses.

URI: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-13-3065-0\_19

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