Lipids and membranes

BIOS 1006

27 Jun 2025

Objectives

- Know all definitions.
- Describe the roles played by lipids.
- Describe micelle and bilayer structures.
- Describe the forces that stabilize lipid structures.
- Predict the relative melting points of fatty acids and the lipids in which they are found.
- Draw a fatty acid given a name or designation: (e.g. trans-18:1$^{\Delta 9}$ or 18:1ω9) and name fatty acids if given a structure.
- Describe the essential and non-essential designations.
- Recognize a triacylglycerol or phospholipid given the names, structures or designations of the components.
- Describe the relationship between lipid fluidity and melting point.
- If given a list of fatty acids or lipids, rank the melting points.
- Describe the biological roles, the chemical reactions and the physical and structural properties of each lipid class.
- Determine the class of a lipid if given a structure.
- Determine the class of isoprenoids, and locate isoprene units in molecules.

Lipids

Are water-insoluble molecules that are highly soluble in organic solvents. They are defined by their solubility (in organic solvents, not water)

Roles of lipids

- Structure (membranes)
- Energy storage (fats, oils)
- Protection (antioxidants, water-proofing)
- Pigments (carotenoids)
- Coenzymes (vitamins, heme)
- Signaling (hormones, growth factors)

Lipids do not form covalent polymers!

Recall:

- proteins are covalent polymers of amino acids
- nucleic acids are covalent polymers of nucleotides
- polysaccharides are covalent polymers of sugars

Lipids also form higher order structures, but the esubunits are not covalently attached. These structures are micelles and bilayers (membranes) that are maintained by IMFs such as LDFs (non-polar parts), hydrogen bonds, dipole-dipole forces, and ion-dipole forces (between lipids and H_2O).

Classes and nomenclature of lipids

- Free fatty acids
- Triacylglycerols
- Phospholipids
- Glycolipids
- Isoprenoids

Fatty acids

Monocarboxylic acids composed of a long hydrocarbon chain with a carboxyl group at the end

- Even number of carbon atoms

- Generally unbranched chain (straight chain)
- Hydrophilic and hydrophobic ends (amphipathic)
- Varying degrees of saturation
- Produced by organisms and synthesized from Acetyl-CoA
- Plants make all the fatty acids they need
- We only produce some fatty acids, the rest must be obtained from our diet (essential fatty acids)
- Essential: in your diet
- Non-essential: can be synthesized by your body (doesn't mean not important!)
- We need to consume **essential fatty acids** (omega-6, omega-3)
- Think of the numbering scheme from the ω-carbon
- Saturated fatty acids are flexible (free rotation aroudn C-C bonds)
- Linear conformation ist he most stable due to steric constraints
- Chains pack tightly against each other and form more rigid, organized aggregates (i.e. membranes)
- London Force Strength is proportional to surface area, depends on length and proximity

saturated fatty acids 0 double bonds

monounsaturated fatty acids 1 double bond

polyunsaturated fatty acids 2 or more double bonds

Double bonds can result in one of two orientations. (cis (favored)/trans)

Saturated fatty acid nomenclature

- 18 carbon saturated fatty acid: 18:0 (carbons:double bonds)
- IUPAC: Octadecanoate (protonated: octadecanoic acid)
- Common: Stearate (protonated: stearic acid)

14:0 **tetra**<u>deca</u>noic acid (tetra = 4, deca = 10)
16:0 hexadecanoic acid
18:0 octadecanoic acid
20:0 **eicosanoic** acid
22:0 **do**<u>cos</u>anoic acid (do = 2, cos = 22)
24:0 tetracosanoic acid
26:0 hexacosanoic acid

Monounsaturated fatty acid nomenclature

18 carbon cis monounsaturated fatty acid with a double bond **starting** at position 11

- Full IUPAC name: cis Δ^{11}-octadecene/-oic acid
- IUPAC shorthand: $18{:}1^{\Delta 11}$
- 18:1 ω 7 (counting backwards)

Polyunsaturated fatty acid nomenclature

18 carbon cis monounsaturated fatty acid with 2 double bonds **starting** at positions 9 and 12

- Full IUPAC name: cis-cis- Δ^{9}, Δ^{12}-octadecadienoic acid (dien = 2 double bonds)
- IUPAC shorthand: $18{:}1^{\Delta 9,\Delta 12}$
- 18:2 ω 6 (from the first double bond counting backwards. assuming all are cis and any other double bond is 3 carbons away)

Lipid properties

Fluidity

The higher the melting point, the lower the fluidity (this is why butter is solid and olive oil is liquid)

Also depends on chain length. Longer chains have...

- Greater surface area
- Stronger London Forces
- Increased melting point