

Q. Describe the structure and functions of lysosomes.

Ans. — C. De. Duve was the first to report about lysosomes in 1955.

Lysosomes can be defined as globular, spherical, rounded or even irregular polymorphic or heterogeneous cytoplasmic organelles surrounded by a single limiting membrane composed of lipoprotein. These contain many enzymes like acid deoxyribonuclease, acid ribonuclease, acid phosphatase, cathepsins, glucuronidase etc. which is useful in digestion of intracellular and extracellular substrates like proteins, carbohydrates nucleic acid etc.

Occurrence: — Lysosomes are found in all types of animal cells except mature mammalian erythrocytes.

Shape & Size: —

Lysosomes may be

- (i) Lysosomes may be rounded, globular, spherical or irregular.
- (ii) Variable in size ranging from 0.2 to 0.8 micron.
- (iii) Exceptionally large in the cells of mammalian kidney i.e. up to 5 micron.

Structure - Lysosomes are bounded by a single lipoprotein membrane. The membrane is impermeable to substrates or enzymes contained in the lysosomes.

(H) The limited permeability of the lysosomal membrane explains why lysosomal hydrolases cannot have a direct action on cellular components.

(iii) This prevents uncontrolled digestion of the cell contents by lysosomal enzymes.

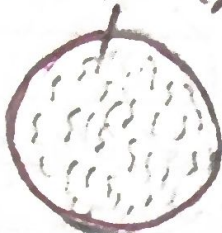
(iv) - determine the permeability through lysosomal membrane

(V) Compounds having a molecular weight higher than 200 do not diffuse through the membrane.

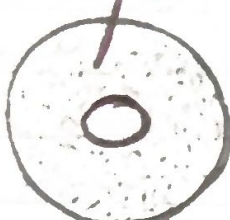
(vi) Internal organisation of lysosomes varies in different cells depending upon the physiological condition of these ~~cells~~ ~~lysosomes~~ ~~with the lysosomal enzymes~~ ~~activity~~

(vii) In some cells the lysosomes have very dense core whereas in other cells these may contain a dense outer region with a less dense inner region. Granular material of some lysosomes contains $\square\square$

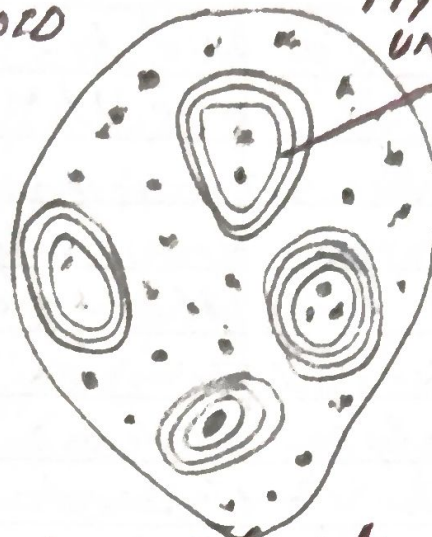
ISOLATED CRYSTALLOID



CRYSTALLOID CORE



MYCLIN FIBRES OF UNDIGESTED FAT.



DIGESTIVE VACUOLE

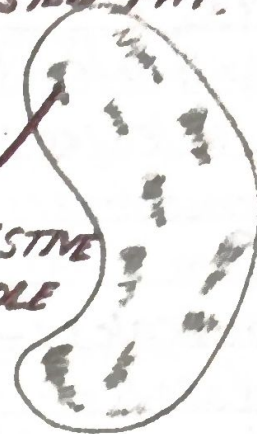


Fig: - A (Lysosomes) B₁ (Rat Liver cells) B₂ (Kidney cells)

(viii) Certain Chemical substances such as cholesterol, Cortisone, Cortisol and chloroquine provide stability to the membrane of lysosomes. These are called stabilizers.

(ix) There is also a group of substances (such as vitamin K and A, detergents, ultraviolet radiations, freezing and Thawing) causes instability of the lysosomal membrane leading to release of enzymes from the lysosomes. These are called labilizers.

Chemical Composition:-

A Lysosome is composed of