

Gastrointestinal Physiology

Lecture 5

*Physiology of the Small Intestine: Motility
and Secretion*

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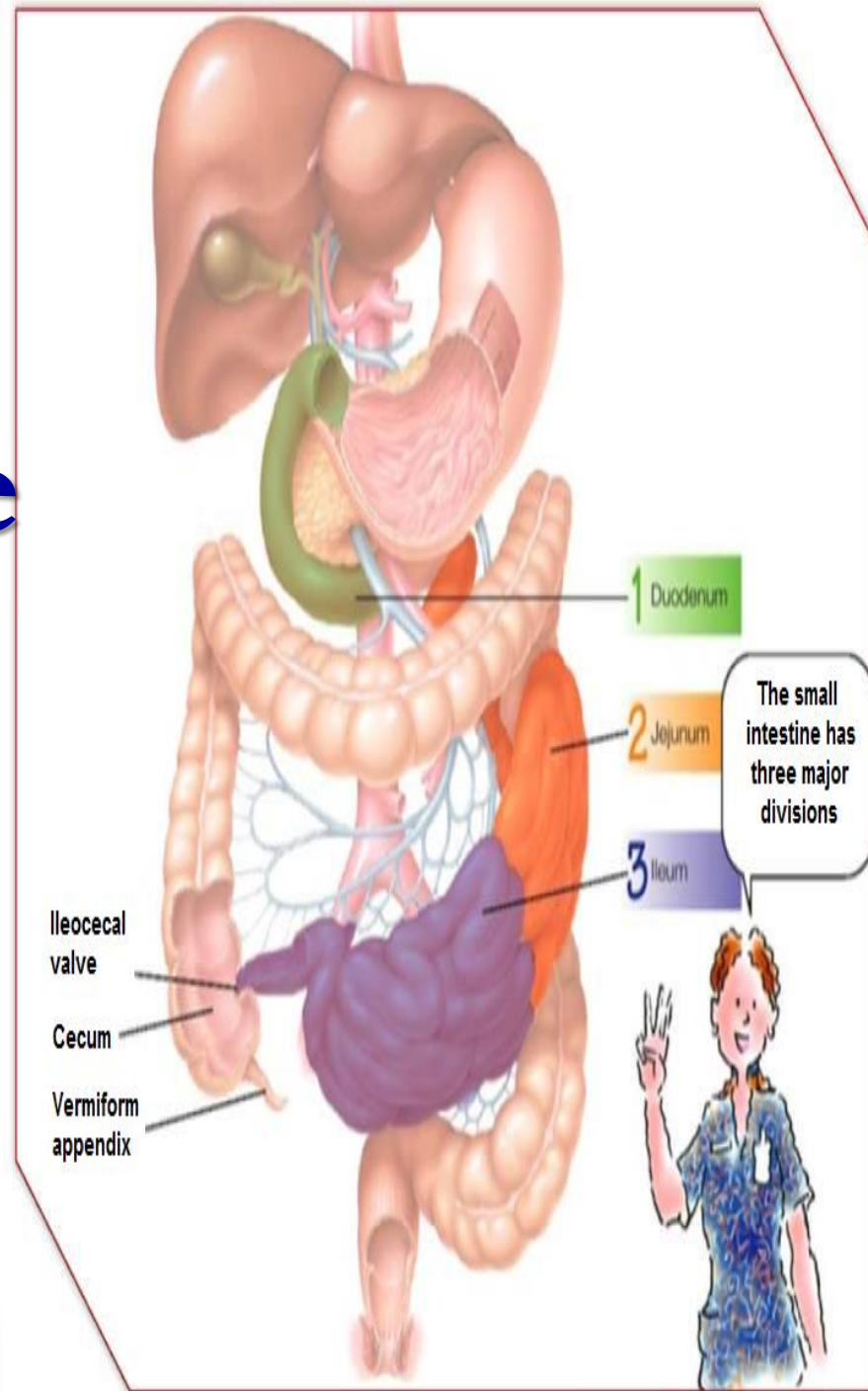
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Learning Objectives

- Motility in the small intestine.
- Control of intestinal motility.
- Secretions of the small intestine
- Digestion of carbohydrates, proteins and fats.
- Basic principles of gastrointestinal absorption.
 - ✓ Absorption of carbohydrates
 - ✓ Absorption of proteins
 - ✓ Absorption of fats
 - ✓ Absorption of vitamins
 - ✓ Absorption and secretion of electrolytes and water

Divisions of the Small Intestine

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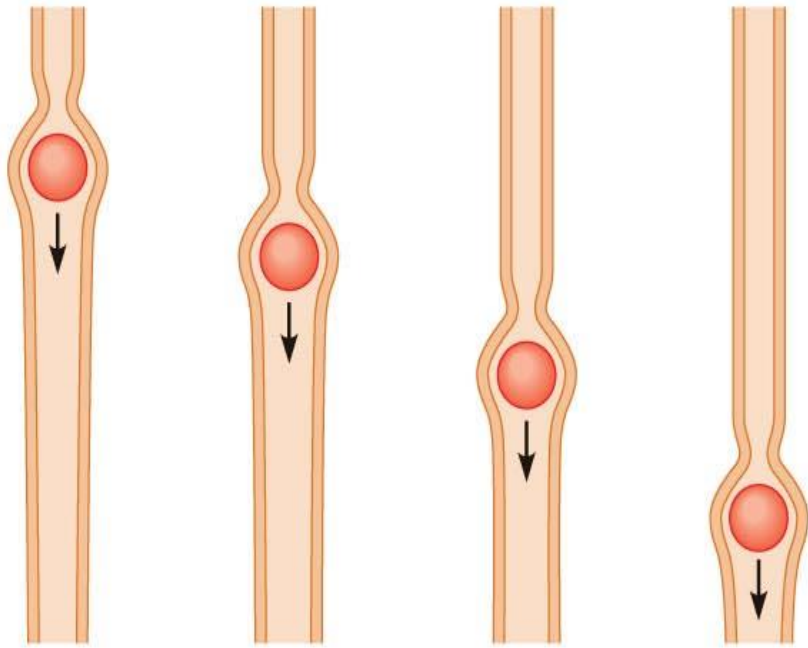
Motility in the Small Intestine

The movements of the small intestine can be divided into:

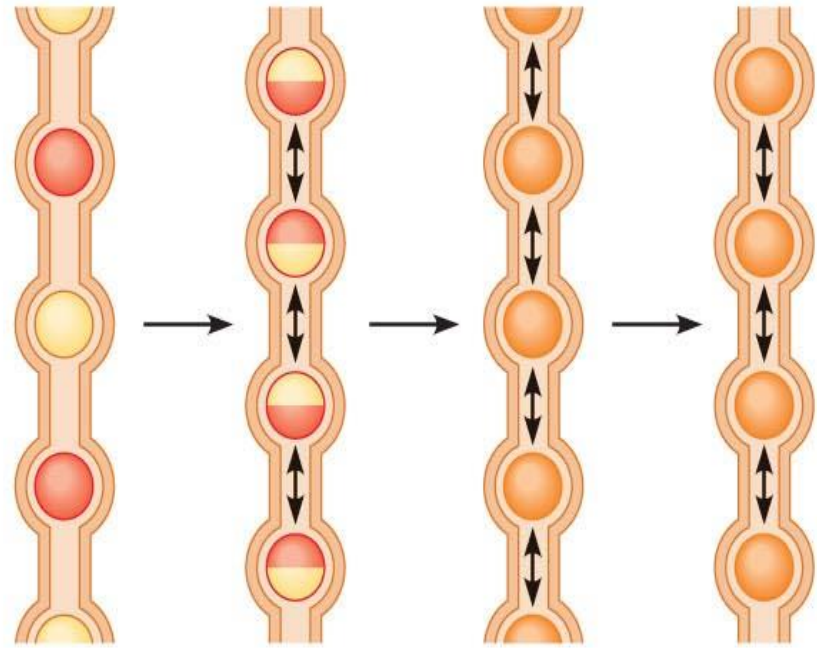
- *Segmenting (Mixing) contractions*
- *Propulsive contractions (Peristalsis)*
- *Migrating motor complex*
- *Antiperistalsis*
- *Peristaltic rush*

1. Mixing (Segmentation) Contractions

- ❧ When a portion of small intestine becomes distended, the segmentation contraction is activated by ENS to divide the intestine into spaced segments which last for fraction of min, and have the appearance of a chain of sausages.
- ❧ As one set of segmentation contractions relaxes, a new set often begins at points between the previous ones.
- ❧ The segmentation contractions become weak when the excitatory activity of ENS is blocked by the drug atropine.
- ❧ The significance of segmentation contractions:
 - Blend different juices with the chyme
 - Bring products of digestion in contact with absorptive surfaces



(a) Peristalsis



(b) Segmentation

2. Propulsive Movements (Peristalsis)

- Organizes propulsion of material over variable distances.
- Usual stimulus is distention.
- They are faster in the proximal intestine and slower in the terminal intestine (velocity 0.5 to 2.0 cm/sec), and the *net movement along the small intestine normally* averages only 1 cm/min (3 to 5 hours are required for passage of chyme from the pylorus to the ileocecal valve).
- Myenteric plexus is important for these movements.
- They can be blocked by the drug atropine.

3- Migrating motor complex (MMC)

- It is bursts of depolarization accompanied by peristaltic contraction that begins in empty stomach during interdigestive period, travels a long whole length of small intestine to reach ileocaecal valve after 1.5-2 h. where it disappears. A new wave of MMC starts.
- The activity of MMC terminates as soon as food is ingested.
- The function of MMC is to propel any remnants in stomach & small intestine into colon during the interdigestive period.

4- Antiperistalsis

In the opposite direction occurs between stomach and duodenum to allow more time for neutralization of chyme and between ileum and caecum to allow time for absorption.

5- Peristaltic rush

- * Powerful rapid peristalsis due to intense irritation of intestinal mucosa as in infectious diarrhea.
- * It is initiated mainly by extrinsic nervous reflexes to brain stem and back to gut.
- * It sweeps the contents of intestine into the colon and thereby relieving the small intestine of irritative chyme or excessive distension.

Movement of the villi

- The villous movement consists of fast shortening and slow lengthening as well as side to side movements.
- Villous contractions are initiated by local nervous reflexes in response to chyme in small intestine.
- They are stimulated by villikin hormone released by intestinal mucosa when it comes in contact with digestive products.
- They facilitate absorption and lymph flow from central lacteals into lymphatic system.

Control of intestinal motility

1- Neural factors

- ★ Vagal excitation increases intestinal and villous movements.
- ★ Sympathetic excitation decreases intestinal and villous movements.

Gastroileal reflex is initiated by gastric distension.

Impulses are conducted through myenteric plexus to initiate a fast peristaltic wave passing to the ileum. The ileocaecal valve relaxes allowing chyme to pass into cecum. This reflex is mediated by vagus nerve.

2- Hormonal factors

- ★ Gastrin, CCK, insulin and serotonin stimulate intestinal motility. Gastrin and CCK relax ileocaecal sphincter.
- ★ Motilin secreted from duodenum stimulates intestinal motility and regulate MMC.
- ★ Secretin and glucagons inhibits intestinal motility and contract ileocaecal sphincter.
- ★ Villikinin stimulates movement of the villi.

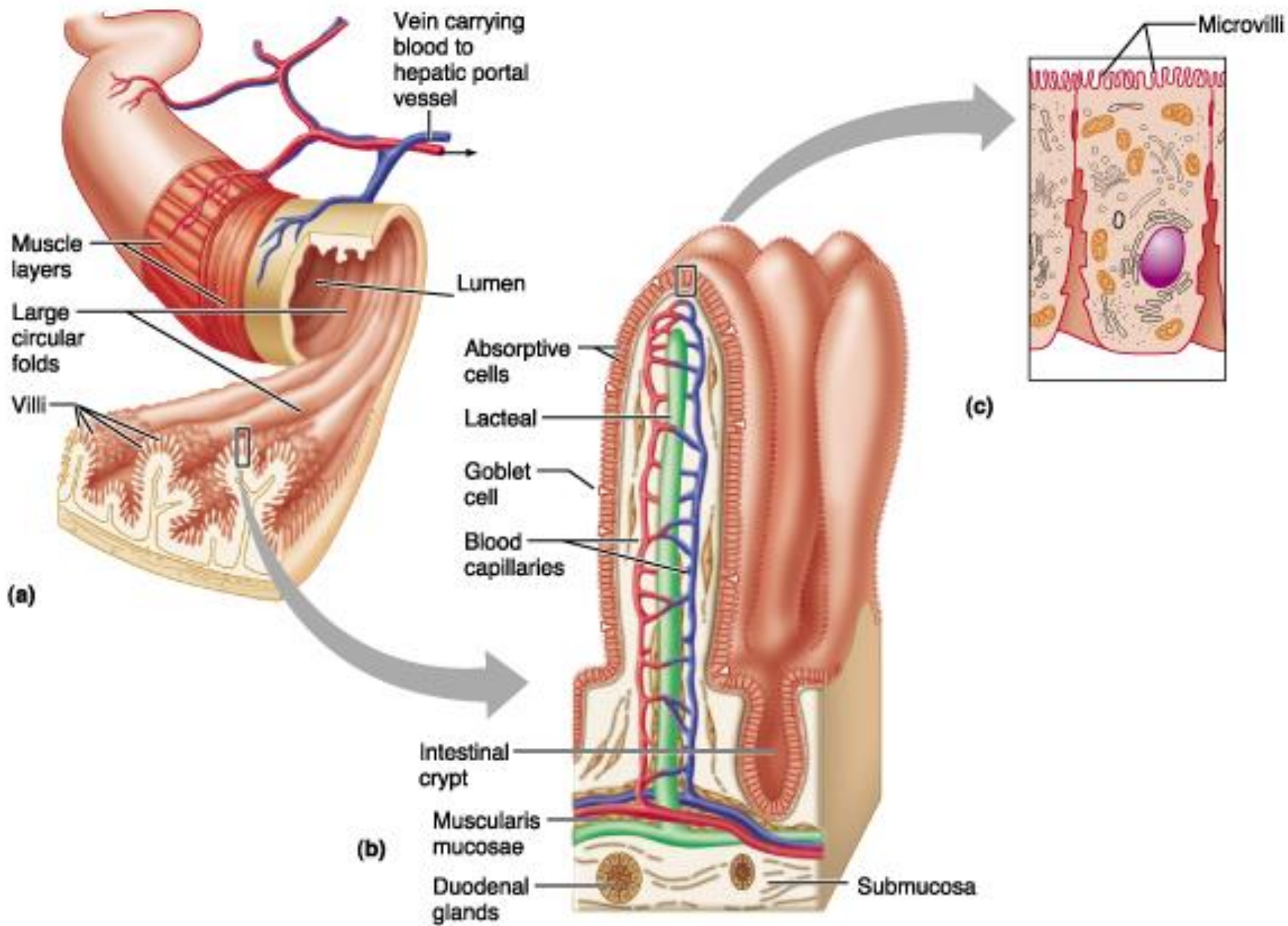
Secretions of The Small Intestine

Secretion of Mucus by Brunner's Glands in the Duodenum

- *Brunner's glands* are located in the wall of the first few centimeters of the duodenum.
- They secrete large amounts of alkaline mucus, which contains a large amount of bicarbonate ions.
- Mucus protects the mucosa.

Secretion of Intestinal Juices (Succus Entericus) by the Crypts of Lieberkühn

- *Crypts of Lieberkühn* are small pits which lie between intestinal villi.
- The surfaces of both the crypts and the villi are covered by an epithelium composed of 2 types of cells: (1) *goblet cells*, secrete *mucus*, and (2) *enterocytes*, secrete large quantities of H_2O and electrolytes and over the surfaces of adjacent villi, reabsorb H_2O , electrolytes & end products of digestion.



Succus entericus

- ✧ It is secreted from intestinal crypts
- ✧ Volume: 1800 ml/day.
- ✧ pH: 7.5-8. It participates in the neutralization of acid chyme delivered from stomach.
- ✧ Composition: 0.6 % organic, 1 % inorganic substance.
- ✧ Most of the enzymes are found either in the brush border or in the cytoplasm of the enterocytes.
- ✧ The enzymes that are actually secreted into the lumen are enteropeptidase and amylase

Control of intestinal secretion

1. Brunner's gland secretion is stimulated by secretin, tactile and vagal stimulation.

2. Intestinal juice secretion is stimulated by:

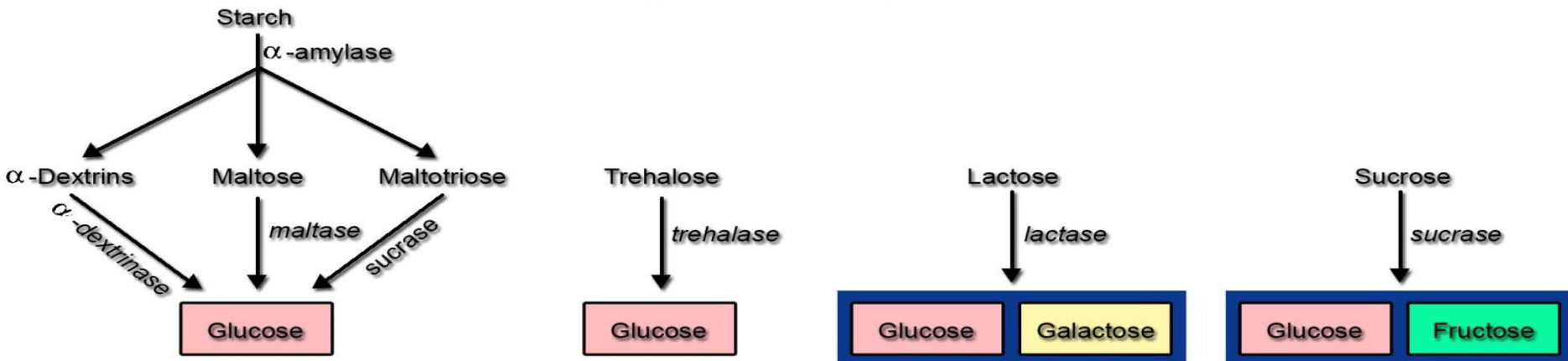
a. Distension, tactile and vagal stimulation.

b. Hormones as gastrin, secretin, CCK, glucagons, enterocrinin.

Sympathetic stimulation exerts an inhibitory effect.

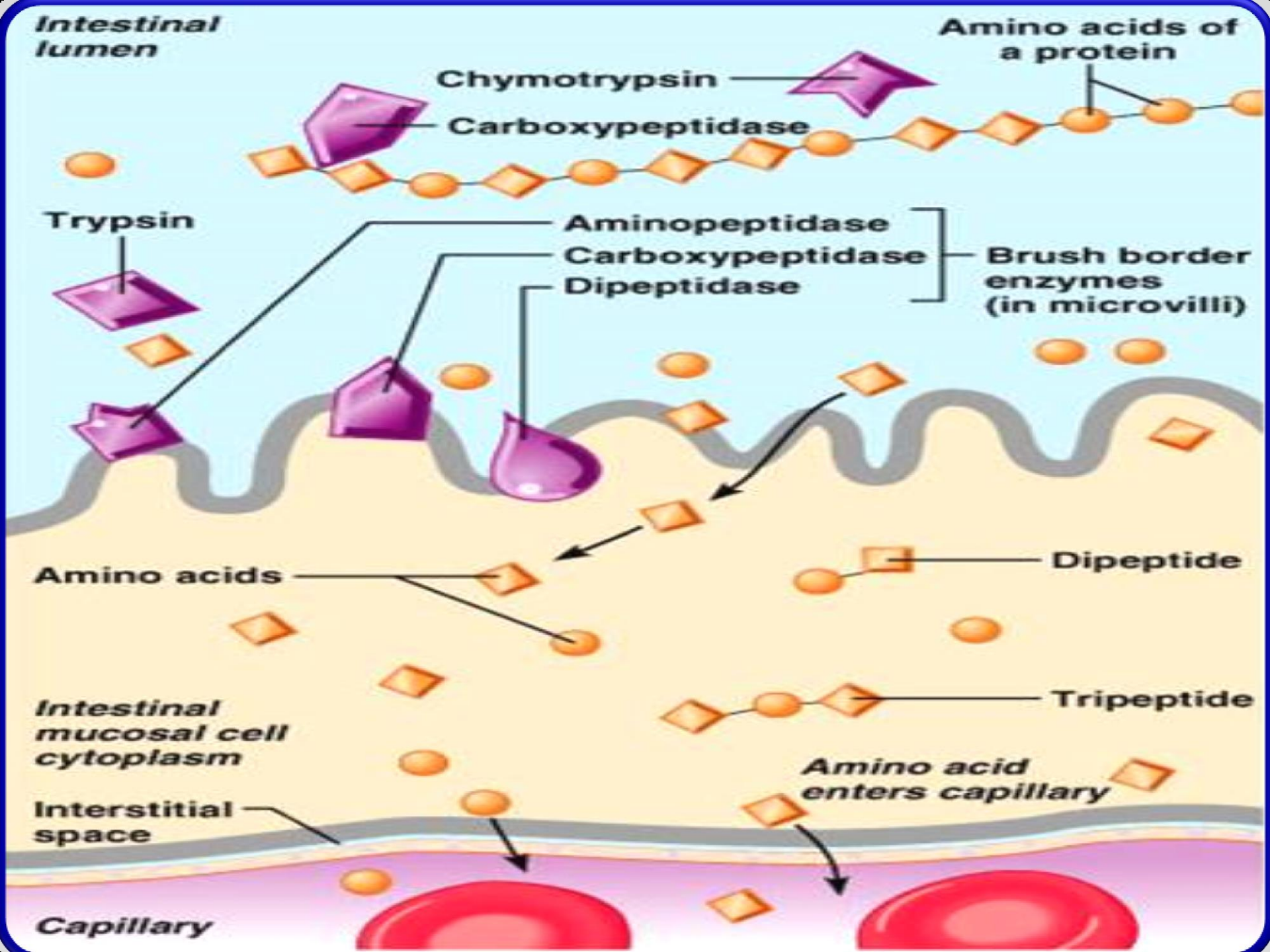
Digestion of Carbohydrates

- The enterocytes lining the villi of the small intestine contain four enzymes (lactase, sucrase, maltase, and α -dextrinase), which are capable of splitting the disaccharides lactose, sucrose, and maltose, plus other small glucose polymers, into their constituent monosaccharides.
- These enzymes are located in the enterocytes covering the intestinal microvilli brush border, so that the disaccharides are digested as they come in contact with these enterocytes.



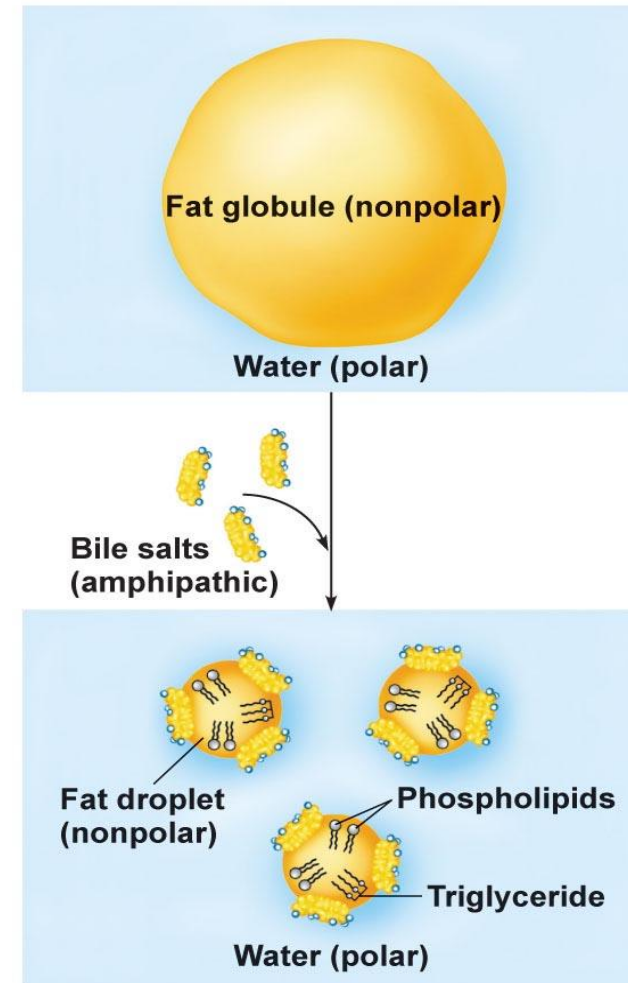
Digestion of Proteins

- Only a small percentage of the proteins are digested all the way to their constituent AA by the pancreatic juices. Most remain as dipeptides and tripeptides
- Most protein digestion occurs in the duodenum and jejunum by Aminopeptidases, Oligopeptidases, Intracellular di and tripeptidases for splitting small peptides into amino acids.



Digestion of Fats

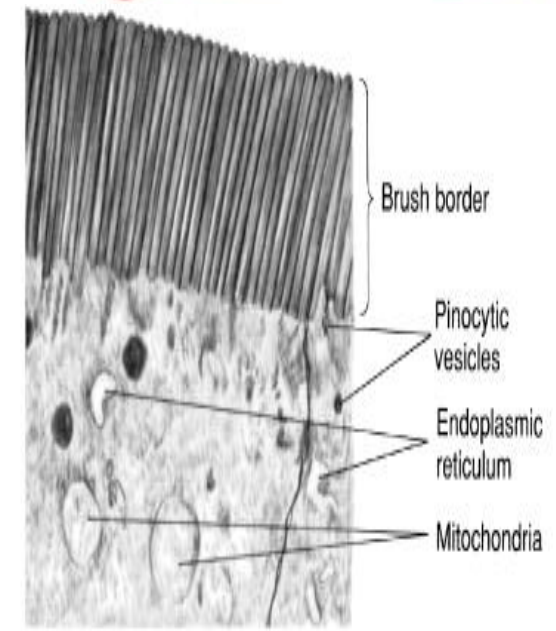
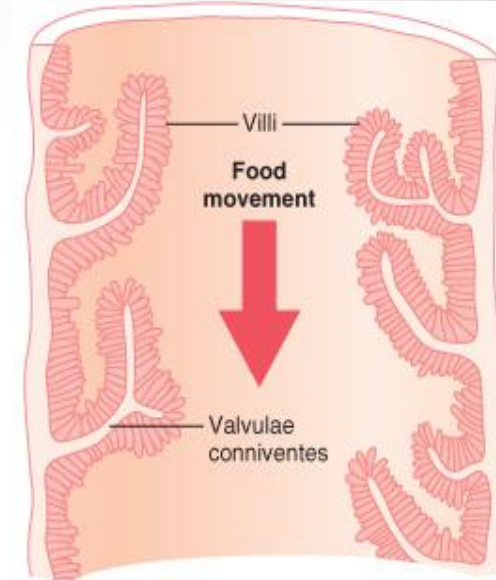
- Bile salts and lecithin in the bile help fat digestion by make the fat globules readily fragmentable with the water in the small intestine (emulsification of fat).
- Bile salts break the fat globules into very small sizes, so that the water-soluble digestive enzymes can act on the globule surfaces.



*Basic Principles of
Gastrointestinal Absorption*

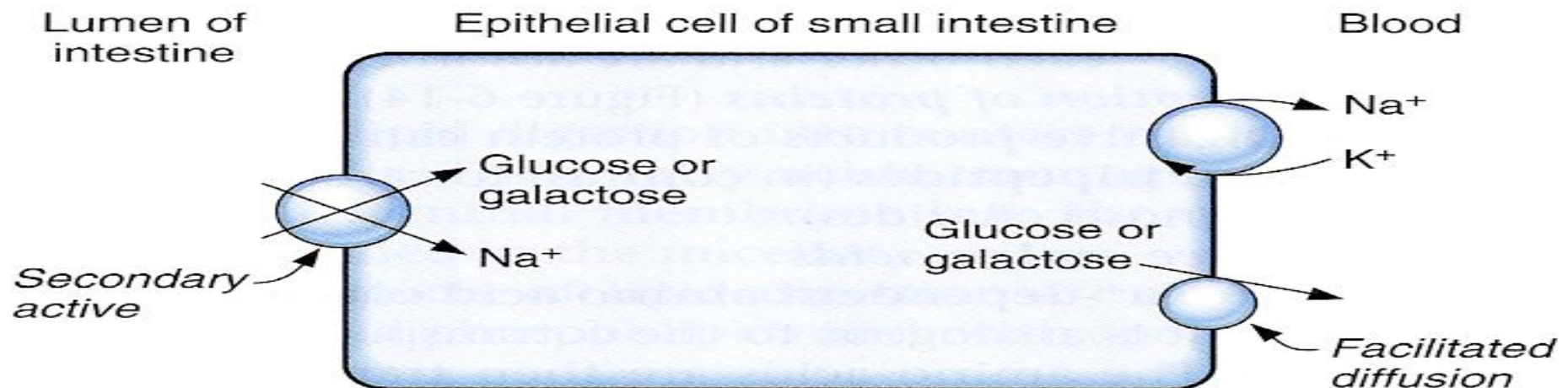
Absorptive Surface of the Small Intestinal

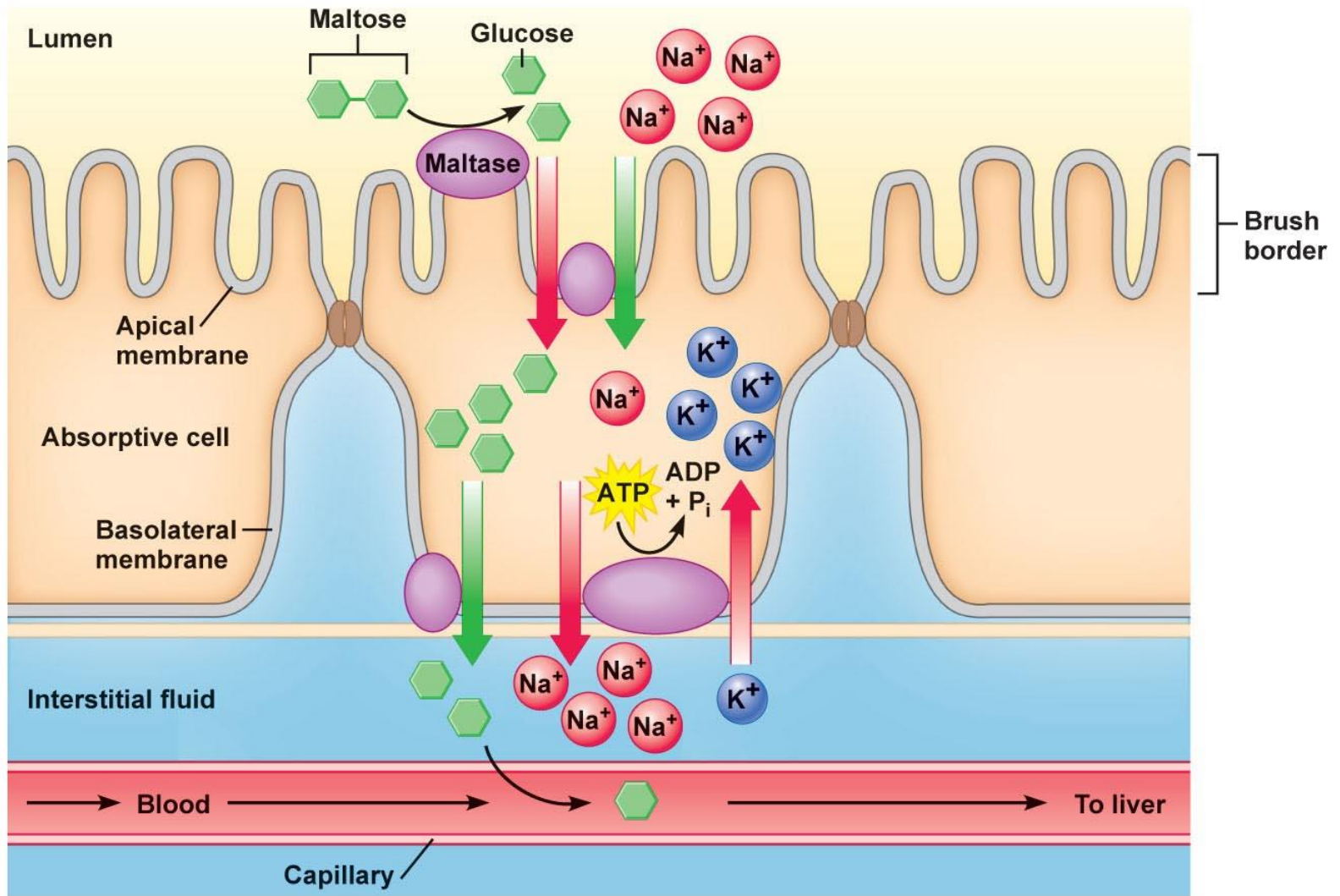
- The absorptive surface of the small intestinal mucosa, showing many folds called valvulae conniventes, well developed in the duodenum and jejunum. They increase the surface area of the absorptive mucosa about **3-fold**.
- The presence of villi on the mucosal surface enhances the total absorptive area another **10-fold**.
- The epithelial cell on each villus is characterized by a brush border, consisting of as many as 1000 microvilli (increases the surface area another **20-fold**).



Absorption of Carbohydrates

- All the carbohydrates in the food are absorbed in the form of monosaccharides; only a small fraction are absorbed as disaccharides.
- Glucose and galactose absorption occurs in a cotransport mode with active transport of Na^+ (2ry active transport) .
- Fructose is independent on Na^+ but it transports in luminal membrane via facilitated diffusion.
- Pentose is transported by passive diffusion

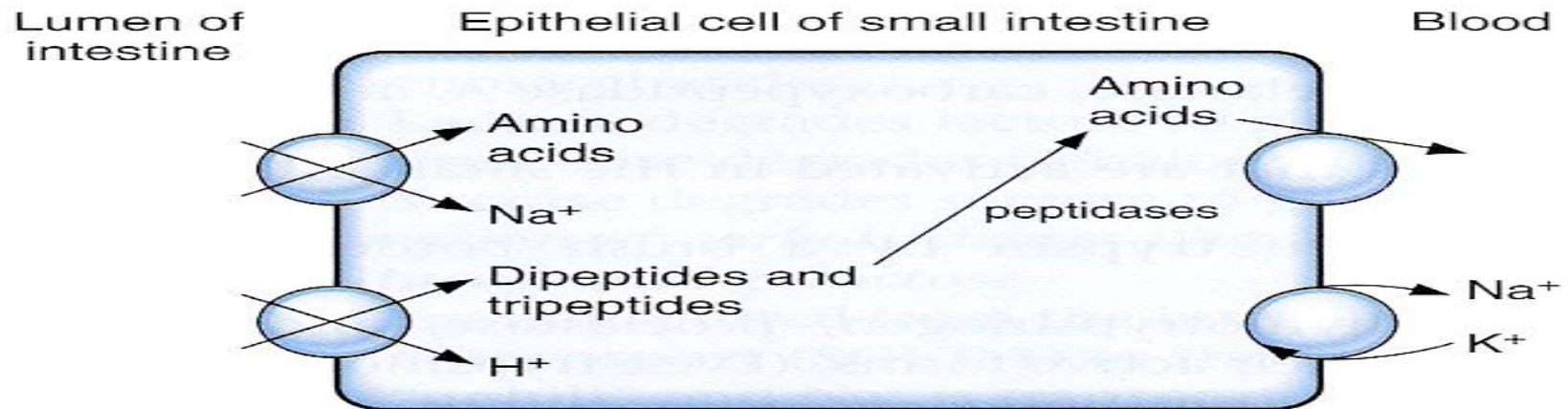




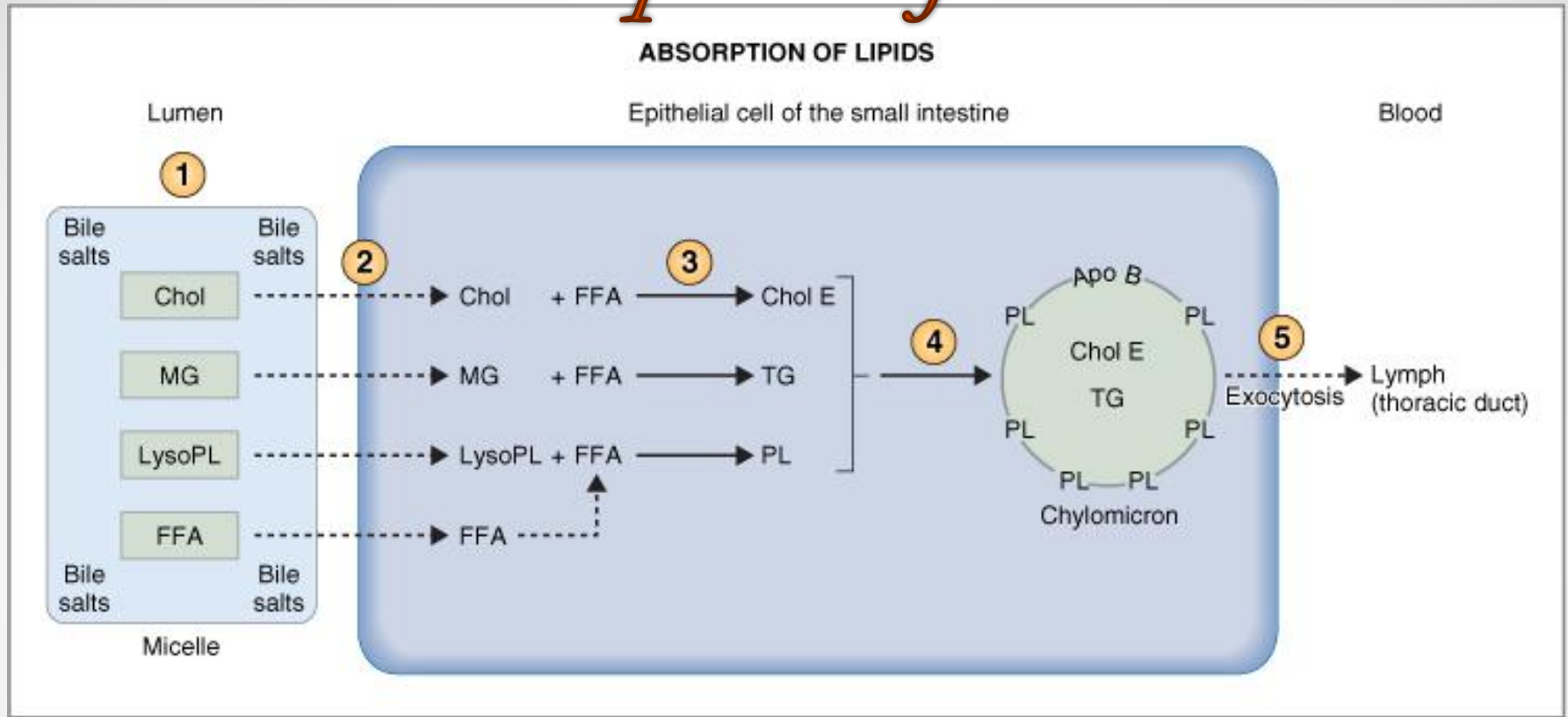
Absorption of Proteins

Proteins are absorbed in the form of dipeptides, tripeptides, and a few free amino acids.

- D- AA are transported by passive diffusion.
- L- AA are transported by 2ry active transport.
- Di and tripeptides cross the brush border by active transport protein carrier. They are hydrolyzed by brush border and cytoplasmic oligopeptidases.
- AA leaves the cell at the basolateral membrane by facilitated transport.



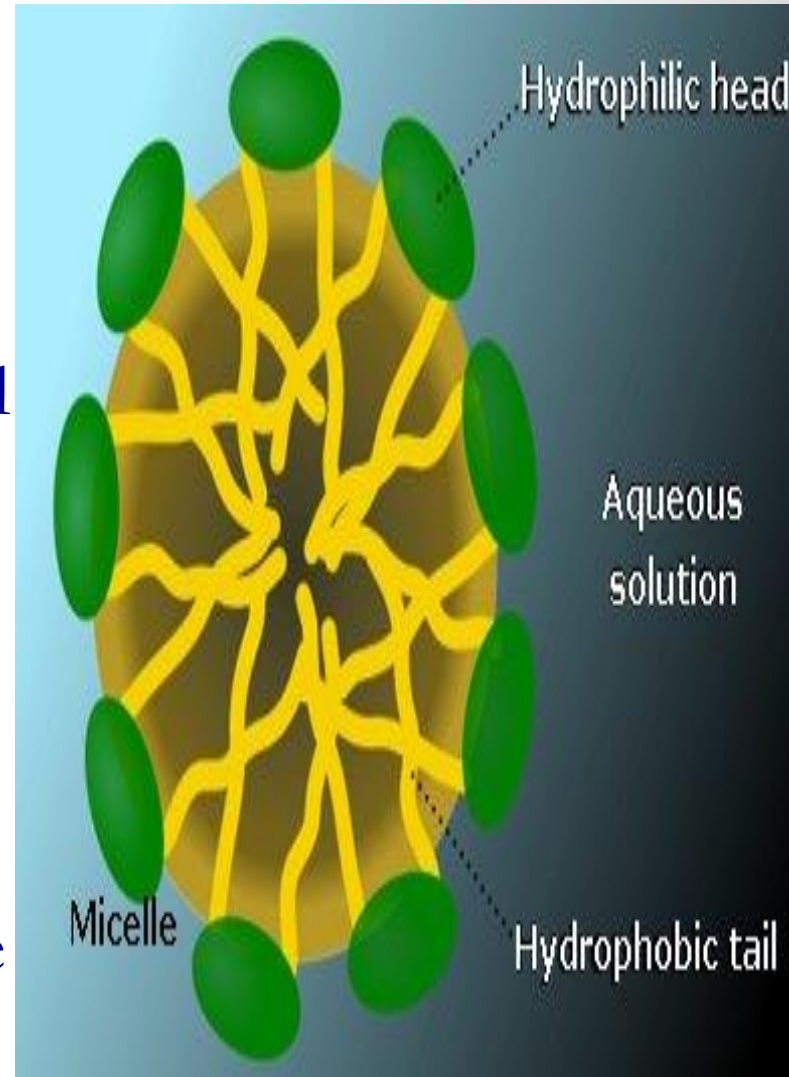
Absorption of Fats



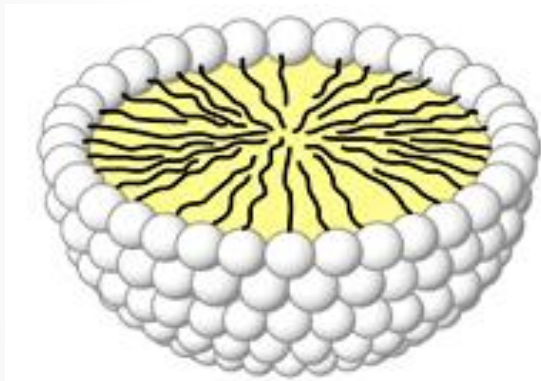
In the presence of an abundance of bile micelles, about 97 per cent of the fat is absorbed; in the absence of the bile micelles, only 40 to 50 per cent can be absorbed.

Formation of Micelles

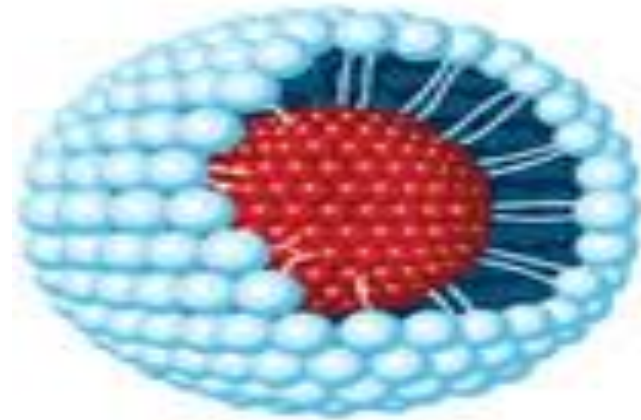
- Bile salts are amphipathic molecules, each composed of a sterol nucleus (fat-soluble) and a polar group (water-soluble).
- *Micelles* are small spherical, cylindrical globules 3 - 6 nm in diameter composed of 20 - 40 molecules of bile salts.
- The polar parts are (-) charged, they allow the entire micelle globule to dissolve in the water of the digestive fluids.

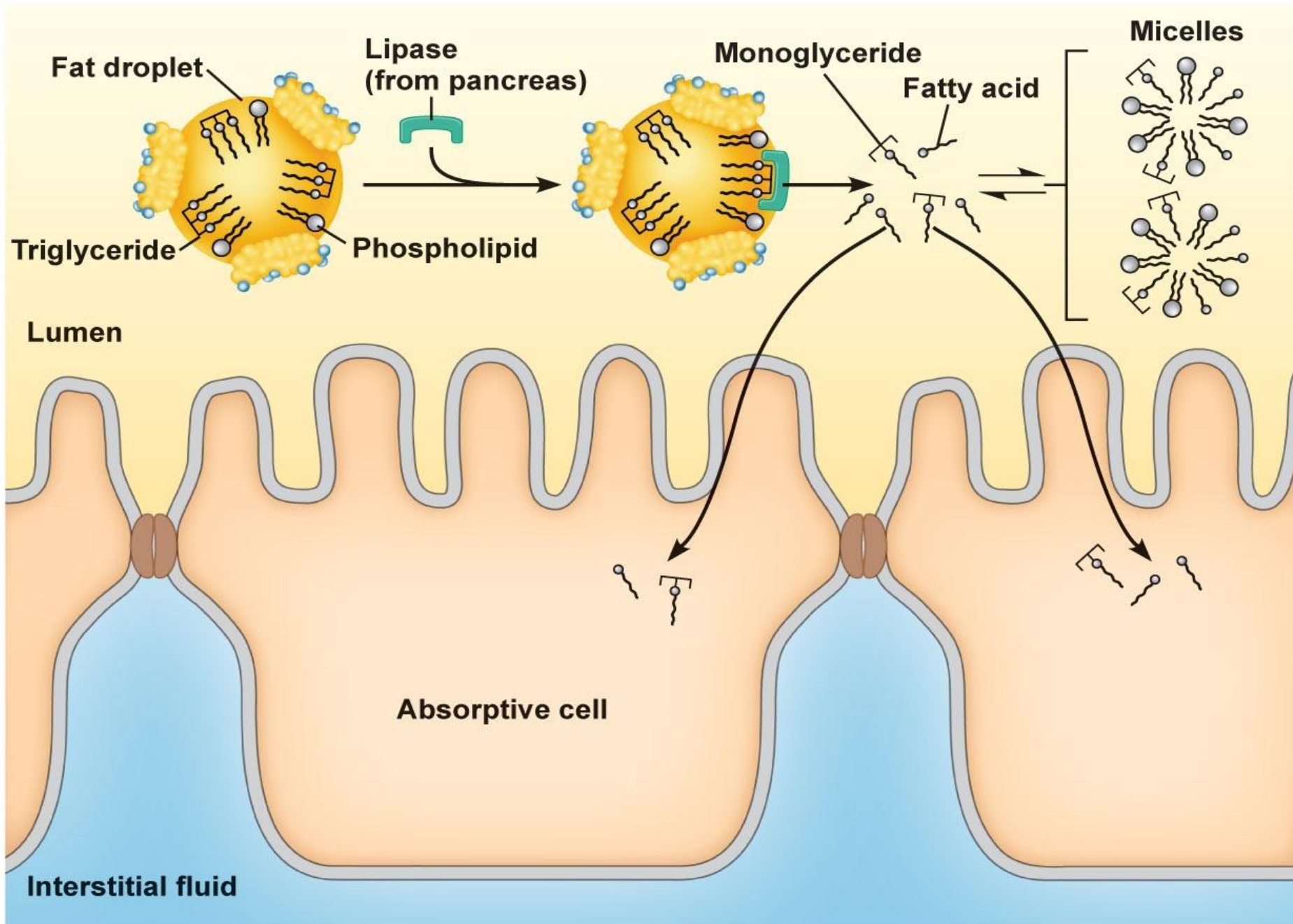


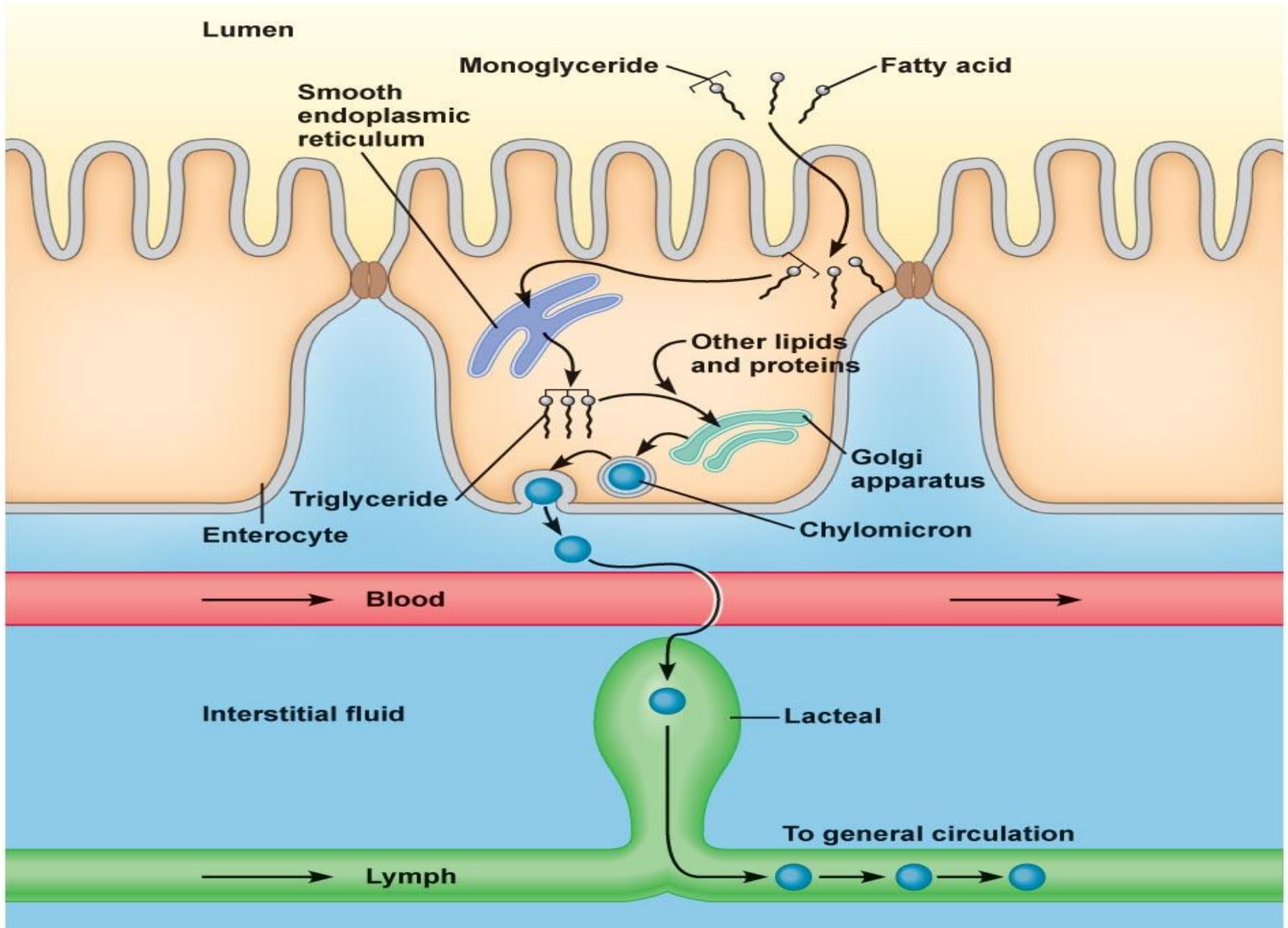
- The micelles act as a transport medium to carry the monoglycerides and free fatty acids to the brush borders of the intestinal epithelial cells.

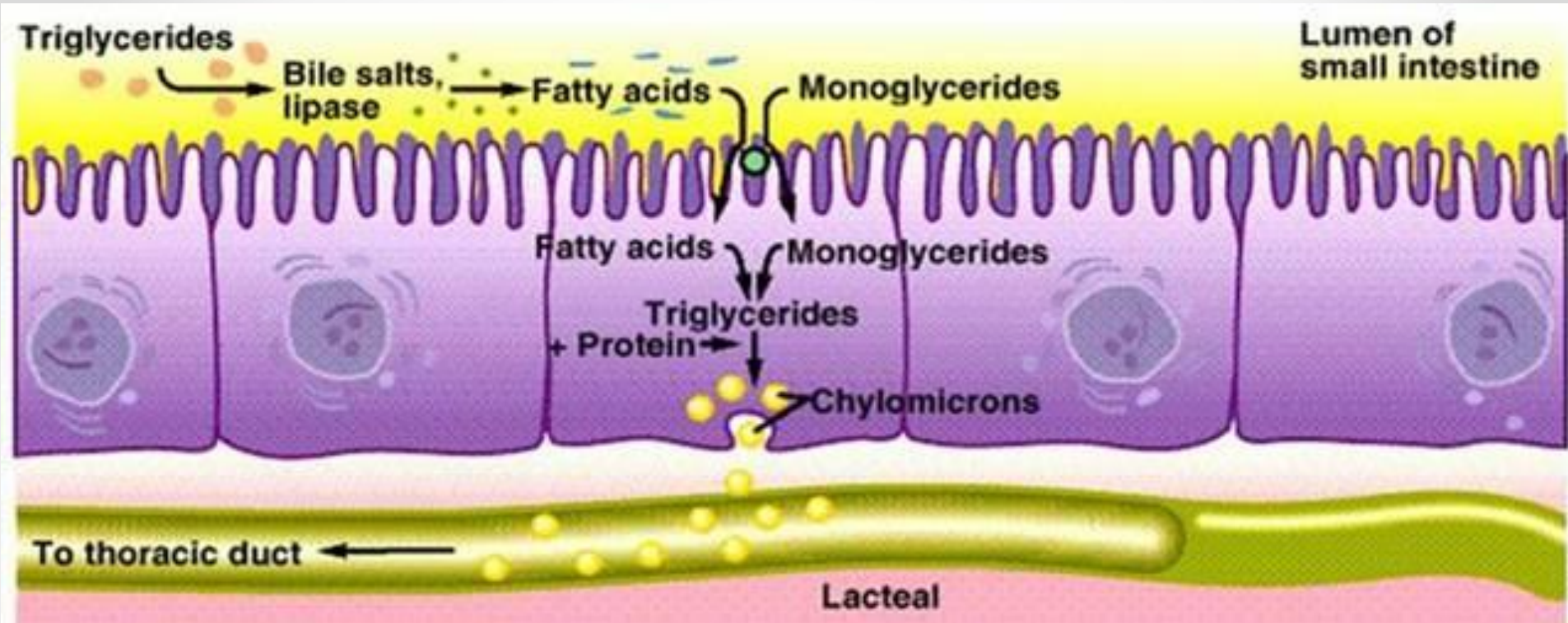


Micelle









- Triglycerides aggregate into globules along with the absorbed cholesterol and phospholipids. B-lipoprotein coat part of the surface of each globule to form chylomicrons.
- It diffuses to side of the cell and is excreted by exocytosis into the central lacteal of villi, to lymph, then to thoracic duct.

Absorption of Vitamins

- a. Fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, & K) are incorporated into micelles and absorbed along with other lipids
- b. Most water-soluble vitamins (C, B₁, B₂, B₆, and folic acid) are absorbed by Na⁺-dependent cotransport mechanisms
- c. Vitamin B₁₂ is absorbed in the ileum and requires intrinsic factor

Gastrectomy results in the loss of parietal cells and loss of intrinsic factor → pernicious anemia

Absorption and secretion of electrolytes and water

- ◎ Electrolytes and H₂O may cross intestinal epithelial cells by either cellular or paracellular route
- ◎ The permeability of the tight junctions varies with the type of epithelium
 - Leaky epithelia are the small intestine and gallbladder
 - A tight epithelium is in the colon

Absorption of Na^+

Na^+ moves into the intestinal cells by the following mechanisms:

1) Passive diffusion

2) Na^+ -glucose or Na^+ -amino acid co-transport

3) Na^+ - Cl^- exchange

4) Na^+ - H^+ exchange

- The next step in the transport process is osmosis of water into the paracellular spaces because a large osmotic gradient has been created by the elevated concentration of ions in the paracellular space.

- **Aldosterone Greatly Enhances Na^+ Absorption:**

This effect of aldosterone is especially important in the colon because it allows virtually no loss of NaCl and water.

Absorption of Cl^-

Cl^- absorption accompanies Na^+ absorption by the following mechanisms:

- 1) Passive diffusion
- 2) Na^+ - Cl^- cotransport
- 3) Cl^- - HCO_3^- exchange

Absorption and secretion of K^+

- ✓ K^+ is absorbed in the small intestine by passive diffusion
- ✓ K^+ secretion in the colon is stimulated by aldosterone
- ✓ Excessive loss of K^+ in diarrheal fluids causes hypokalemia

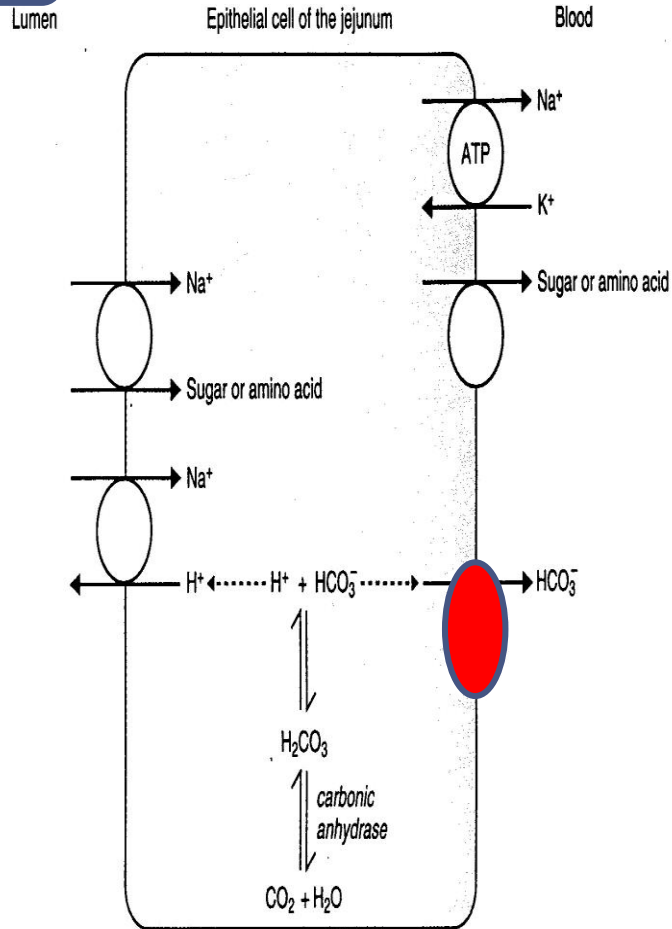
Secretion of Bicarbonate Ions in the Ileum

o The epithelial cells on the surfaces of the villi in the ileum and large intestine have a special capability of secreting HCO_3^- in exchange for absorption of Cl^- .

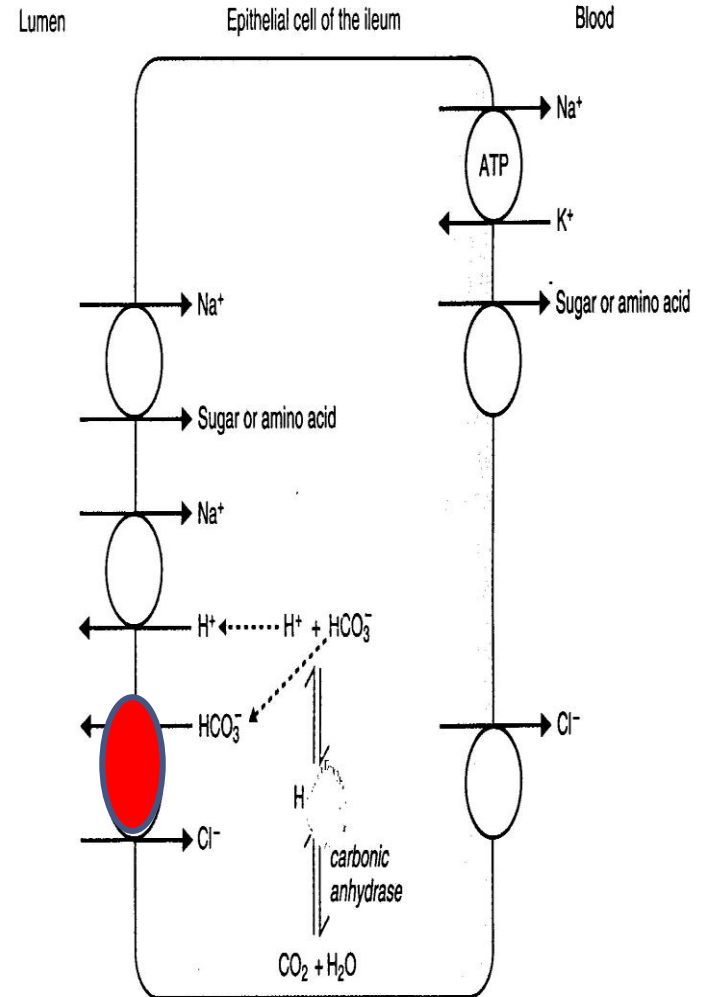
o This is important because it provides alkaline HCO_3^- that neutralize acid products formed by bacteria in the large intestine.

Electrolytes Transport in The Small Intestine

Jejunum



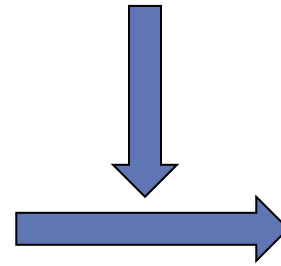
Ileum



Ca⁺⁺ Absorption by Enterocytes

• ↓ Plasma Ca⁺⁺ → ↑ Parathyroid hormone

25-hydroxy-vitamin D₃



1,25 dihydroxy-vitamin D₃



Stimulates synthesis of Ca-binding protein and Ca-ATPase in enterocytes

Hormonal control of absorption & secretion

- Glucocorticoid = \Uparrow absorption of H_2O & ions
(small & large intestine)
- Somatostatin = \Uparrow H_2O & ions absorption
(ileum & colon)
- Epinephrine = \Uparrow NaCl absorption (ileum)
- Aldosterone = \Uparrow synthesis of Na^+ channel
(colon)
- Catecholamines = \Downarrow intestinal secretion



*Designed by
Daphne*

Thank You