

Special Issue

The Role of Autophagy in Disease and Cancer

Message from the Guest Editors

Autophagy is an important intracellular degradation mechanism that occurs due to various stressful conditions, including the accumulation of damaged proteins and organelles, as well as nutrient deficiency. Previous studies have suggested that mutations in autophagy-related processes could be implicated in human diseases, including infections, cancer, aging, neurodegeneration and metabolic diseases. Comprehensive research is currently being performed in order to discover novel therapeutic markers that are able to modulate the autophagic process in vivo. This evidence has shown that a large number of bioactive drugs are involved in the regulation of autophagy via the modulation of several transcriptional factors and signaling pathways. On the other hand, the most important critical issue is represented by the limited availability of therapeutic drugs and the lack of clinical trials. In this context, the need for an adequate understanding of the complex role of autophagy in human pathologies should be clearly highlighted; this is in order to promote the discovery of new potential targets to enhance the outcome of therapeutic strategy.

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