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Lipid

The lipid molecules are amphipathic in nature and are arranged within the membrane by the help of two types of ends. These are as follows

- (i) Polar Hydrophilic End This region is in the form of (water loving) head, which faces towards the outer sides of the cell membrane to interact with the aqueous environments on both sides.
- (ii) Non-polar Hydrophobic End This region is in the form of (water repelling) tail, both ends of which faces each other that occur towards the centre of the cell membrane.

The proportion of lipid molecules varies in plasma membrane of different cell types. These are formed of cholesterol (25-32%) and mainly of phospho- glycerides or phospholipids (55-75%). Outside of cell Phosphatidylcholine

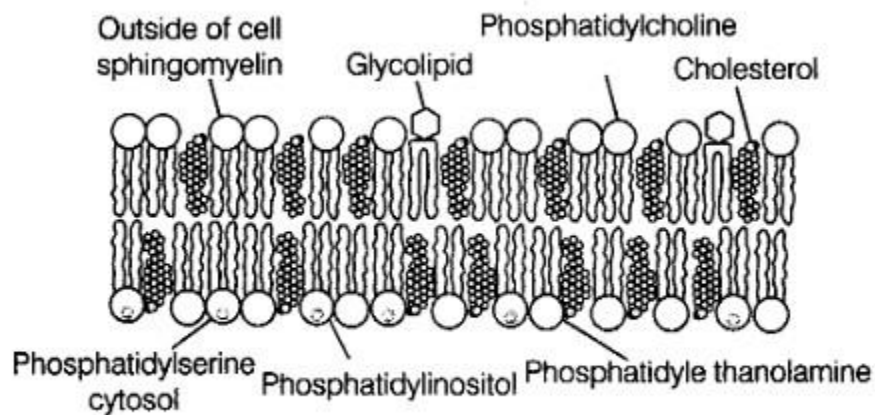


Fig. 8.5 Generalised view of plasma membrane

Proteins

Depending upon the ease of extraction, the ratio of protein and lipid varies considerably in different cell types. In human beings, the membrane of the erythrocytes (RBCs) has approximately 52% protein and 40% lipid.