

The role of regulatory T cells in chronic and acute viral infections

Keynan, Yoav; Catherine, M. Card; McLaren, Paul J.; Dawood, Magdy R.; Kasper, Ken; Keith, R

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Abstract:

Regulatory T cells, a subset of CD4⁺ T lymphocytes, play a pivotal role in the maintenance of the balance between the tissue-damaging and protective effects of the immune response. These cells have immunosuppressive function and have been intensely studied in the context of autoimmunity, cancer, allergies, asthma, and infectious diseases. Their role in chronic and persistent viral infections is well appreciated. In acute viral infections, the function of these cells is still unclear. The host and pathogen factors that control the generation and activity of regulatory T cells and the role of these cells in modulating expansion, contraction, and development of immune memory in acute respiratory virus infection need to be further elucidated.