

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Metabolism

Metabolism is the set of life-sustaining chemical transformations within the cells of living organisms. The three main purposes of metabolism are the conversion of food/fuel to energy to run cellular processes, the conversion of food/fuel to building blocks for proteins, lipids, nucleic acids, and some carbohydrates, and the elimination of nitrogenous wastes. These enzyme-catalyzed reactions allow organisms to grow and reproduce, maintain their structures, and respond to their environments. Metabolism is usually divided into two categories: **catabolism**, the breaking down of organic matter, for example, by cellular respiration, and **anabolism**, the building up of components of cells such as proteins and nucleic acids. Usually, breaking down releases energy and building up consumes energy.

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