Apoptosis involves a family of proteins called caspases. In apoptosis a cascade of caspases is activated.

Once an imitator is activated, many executioner caspases can be activated by the cleaving of predomains which are then discarded.

BCL2 proteins are responsible for the intracellular activation of apoptosis. E.g. bax, bac

Note that the BCL2 family consists of both pro-apoptotic factors as well as anti-apoptotic factors—it is the balance between these that determine whether apoptosis will occur or not.

IAPs, BCL2 family and survival factors regulate apoptosis.

Survival factors work in 3 ways to increase survival/ supress apoptosis:

- ${\bf 1.} \quad \hbox{Increase the production of anti-apoptotic BCL2 protein}$
- 2. Inactivate pro-apoptotic protein
- 3. Inactivate anti-IAPs

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