

Most **cell signals** are chemical in nature. For example, prokaryotic organisms have sensors that detect nutrients and help them navigate toward food sources. In multicellular organisms, growth factors, hormones, neurotransmitters, and extracellular matrix components are some of the many types of chemical signals cells use. These substances can exert their effects locally, or they might travel over long distances. For instance, neurotransmitters are a class of short-range signaling molecules that travel across the tiny spaces between adjacent neurons or between neurons and muscle cells. Other signaling molecules must move much farther to reach their targets. One example is follicle-stimulating hormone, which travels from the mammalian brain to the ovary, where it triggers egg release.

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