

Colony-stimulating factors (CSFs) are secreted glycoproteins that bind to receptor proteins on the surfaces of hemopoietic stem cells, thereby activating intracellular signaling pathways that can cause the cells to proliferate and differentiate into a specific kind of blood cell (usually white blood cells. For red blood cell formation, see erythropoietin).

They may be synthesized and administered exogenously. However, such molecules can at a later stage be detected, since they differ slightly from the endogenous ones in, e.g., features of a post-translational modification.

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