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Cover picture: Morphology of germinal center (GC) B cells cultured with a caspase-8-specific inhibitor. Freshly isolated germinal center B cells from human tonsils were cultured either in complete medium (left panel) or in medium supplemented with an optimal concentration of the caspase-8-specific inhibitor z-IETD-fluoromethylketone (fmk) (right panel). The cells were visualized by May-Grünwald Giemsa staining after 4 h of culture. Many apoptotic figures, characterized by nuclear condensation and fragmentation, are seen in cultures carried out in complete medium. By contrast, most GC B cells cultured with z-IETD-fmk show a normal healthy morphology with a large, nonfragmented nucleus. This indicates that GC B cell apoptosis is a caspase-dependent process that relies more specifically on activation of caspase-8, a proximal element of the Fas signalling pathway. See related article in this issue by Hennino et al., pp. 447–458.

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