Some of these cytokines might favorably influence the biological therapy of cancer and they have been collectively referred to by clinicians as "biological response modifiers." This review summarizes current knowledge about the molecular biology and biological properties of most of the common cytokines and provides a brief survey of their therapeutic potential in patients with cancer. Biological response modifiers (BRMs) are substances that modify immune responses. They can be both endogenous (produced naturally within the body) and exogenous (as pharmaceutical drugs), and they can either enhance an immune response or suppress it. Some of these substances arouse the body's response to an infection, and others can keep the response from becoming excessive. Thus they serve as immunomodulators in immunotherapy (therapy that makes use of immune responses), which can be helpful in Therapeutics - Therapeutics - Biological response modifiers. Biological response modifiers, used to treat cancer, exert their antitumour effects by improving host defense mechanisms against the tumour. They have a direct antiproliferative effect on tumour cells and also enhance the ability of the host to tolerate damage by toxic chemicals that may be used to destroy the cancer. Biological response modifiers include monoclonal antibodies, immunomodulating agents such as the bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine used against tuberculosis, lymphokines and cytokines such as interleukin-2, and the...