Allergy-immunology glossary

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Towards a clear designation of some of the terms used in allergology and immunology.

**Migration-inhibitory factor (MIF)**
The proinflammatory cytokine MIF is a soluble, nondialysable factor that is produced by sensitized lymphocytes following exposure to a specific antigen. It inhibits macrophage migration and causes adherence.\(^1\) It plays an important role in the exacerbation of a wide range of autoimmune and inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory bowel diseases.\(^2\)

**NANC nerves**
Nonadrenergic, noncholinergic (NANC) innervation, the third division of the autonomic nervous system, has both inhibitory and excitatory parts. The inhibitory (i-NANC) system may modulate smooth muscle tone, and the excitatory (e-NANC) system certainly underlies neurogenic inflammation. Substance P and the neurokinins A and B are the neurotransmitters of the excitatory part whereas vasoactive intestinal peptide, nitric oxide and ATP are the neurotransmitters of the i-NANC.\(^4,5\)

**Neutral endopeptidase**
Neutral endopeptidase (NEP) is a cell surface peptidase that catalytically inactivates a wide variety of peptides. It is described in airways as the major degrading enzyme of tachykinins such as neurokinin A (NKA) and substance P.\(^6\) The opiorphins are a newly characterized class of peptides that act as potent endogenous neutral endopeptidase (NEP) inhibitors.\(^7\)

**REFERENCES:**