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Nomenclature of hyaluronic acid

'Hyaluronic acid' is the name given by Karl Meyer to a polysaccharide composed of *N*-acetylglucosamine and glucuronic acid. The first part of the name, 'hyal-', originates from hyaloid (vitreous), because Meyer & Palmer (1934) first found this polysaccharide in the 'vitreous humor' of the bovine eye. Subsequently, it was found in numerous prokaryote and eukaryote systems. To designate the polyanion, the term 'hyaluronate', without a corresponding cation, is used extensively in the biochemical literature. In agreement with the recommendations on 'Polysaccharide Nomenclature' (IUB-IUPAC Joint Commission on Biochemical Nomenclature, 1982/3), we suggest that the term 'hyaluronan' be used for this polysaccharide generally, irrespective of its degree of dissociation.

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