

# HOW AND WHERE ARE DRUGS ABSORBED?

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

A drug or a xenobiotic, in order to exert its pharmacological or toxic effects, must interact with its receptors at their action sites or therapeutic target. The essential step is therefore the absorption of the substance, that is, its entry from outside the body, unless the administration is done directly into the bloodstream. In this chapter, we review the biological barriers that the drug must cross in order to enter the body, which mechanisms are implicated in this process, and how the physiological characteristics of the administration route affect the absorption rate and extent.