End-of-term Reflection

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Introduction to Immunology has exposed me to a different but complex field of biology and the human body. The immune system has many components and mechanisms that work together to protect the body from foreign pathogens, infections, and disease. Specifically, the immune system is broken between two components: innate immunity and adaptive immunity. Innate immunity is immunity that an individual is born with and is composed of physical and chemical barriers which provides the first line of defense against foreign pathogens. Skin, mucous, interferons, phagocytes and natural killer T cells are a few examples of innate immunity structures. Furthermore, the innate system activates the adaptive immune system which is acquired after infection or receiving vaccinations. Adaptive immunity is specific to antigens and develops long term memory for a faster response to future infections. Cell mediated responses, active, and passive immunity are all associated with adaptive immunity. Becoming familiar with the different mechanisms of the innate and adaptive immune system provides more knowledge on how the human body operates and is important to know as I continue to pursue a career in the medical field.