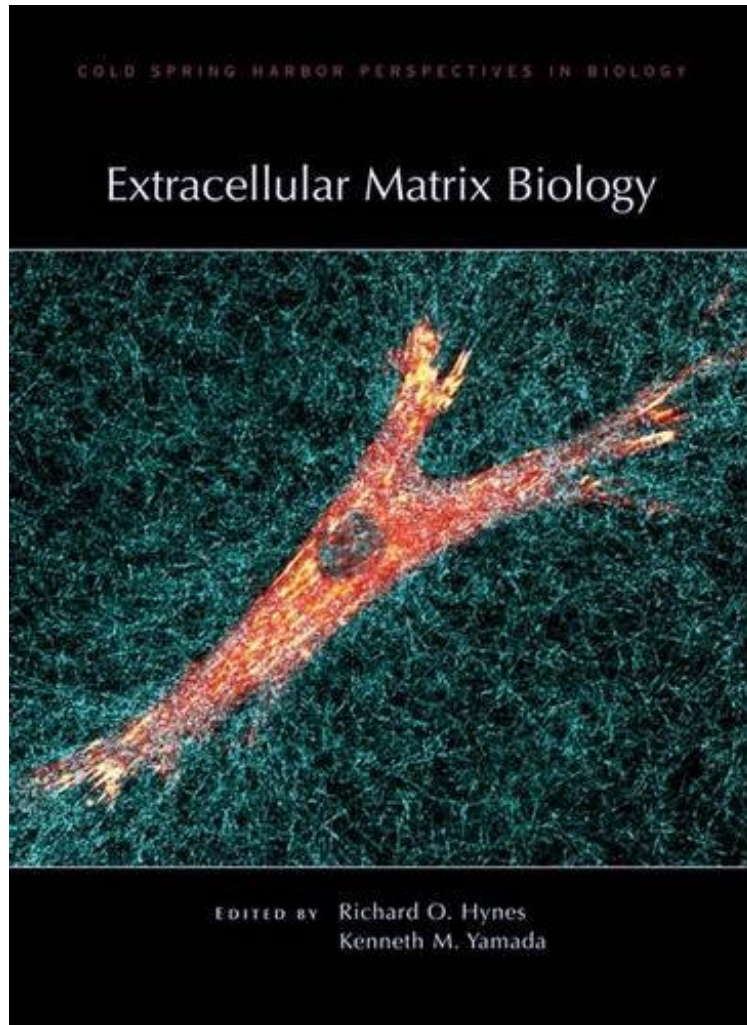


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In most tissues, cells are surrounded by an extracellular matrix (ECM) containing proteins such as collagen, laminin, and fibronectin. The ECM plays an important role in the regulation of cell function. ECM proteins bind to cell surface receptors such as integrins, activating signaling pathways that regulate cellular morphology, adhesion, cell migration, cell proliferation, and apoptosis. This book covers all aspects of ECM composition and function, as well as alterations in the ECM that occur during tumorigenesis and other disease states.