

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROTOZOA

1) SHAPE

1. Protozoa do not have a cell wall and therefore can have a variety of shapes. Nevertheless, some of the protozoans have a pliant layer, a pellicle^(2000 flagellates), or a stiff shell outside the cell membrane.

*2) HABITAT

Protozoa prefer living in moist and aquatic habitats. Their cysts can be found in the bleakest part of the ecosphere.

Protozoas are found drifting in the oceans, seas, and freshwater. They are at the base of food chains.

3) MODE OF NUTRITION

The mode of nutrition of protozoa is heterotrophic, and most species obtain food by phagocytosis. Phagocytosis is the process where the cell changes shape by sending out pseudopodia to make contact with food particles.

*4) INTAKE OF FOOD

Protozoa take food into the cell at a point called the cytostome^(2000 in Kingdoms). The food is ingested by them and lysosomal enzymes digest the food. There are also certain types

of protozoa that take in food by their cell membranes. Some others such as the amoeba, surround food and absorb it. Others have mouth pores into which they pull in food.

5) DIGESTION OF FOOD

Protozoans digest their food in spaces called vacuoles. Contractile vacuoles that are found in protozoa thriving in freshwater, excrete water that penetrates into the cells by osmosis. While chewing down the food, protozoans ~~are~~ produce and release nitrogen.

6) LOCOMOTION

Protozoa species move on their own by one of the three types of locomotor organelles, such as flagella, cilia, or pseudopodia.

7) REPRODUCTION

Protozoa reproduce by the method of binary fission or multiple fission. Some of the members reproduce by asexual mode, some by sexual ~~mode~~ means, and some by both.