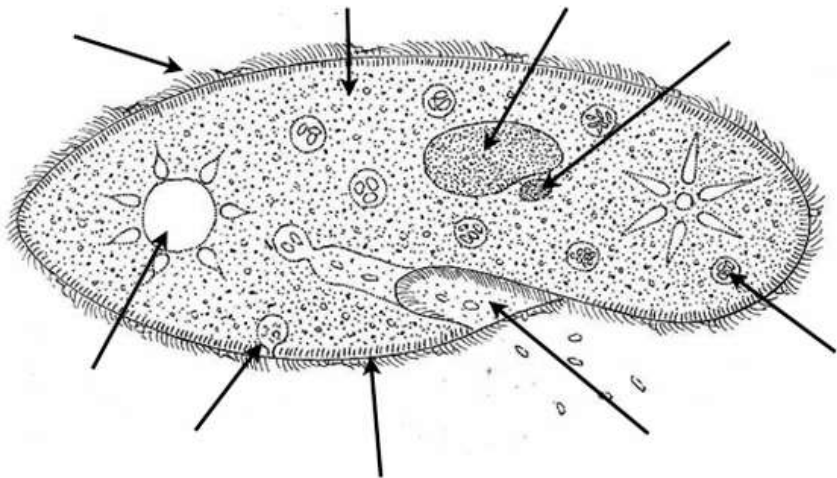


Protozoa

Paramecium

Paramecium is a ciliate protozoan. Ciliates' bodies are covered with fine cytoplasmic hair-like structures called cilia. Flickering movements of the cilia propel the organism through the water and also create feeding currents. Paramecium, illustrated here, is a ciliate. In describing its structure, comparisons will be made with amoeba. It is suggested, therefore, that amoeba is studied first.

Structure of paramecium



Reproduction of paramecium

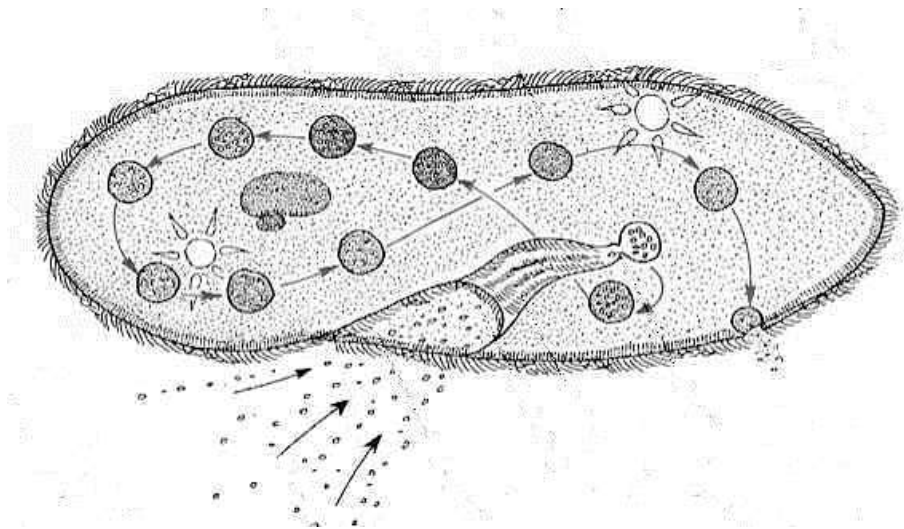
Paramecium reproduces, like amoeba, by binary fission. The ciliate stops moving (1) and both mega- and micronucleus divide and move to opposite ends of the organism (2). The cytoplasm then divides at right angles to the long axis (3) and the daughter paramecia separate (4). Binary fission may take place 2 or 3 times each day.



There is also a complex sexual process in which two paramecia join by their oral surfaces. The meganucleus breaks down and the micronucleus divides. One of the micronuclei of each individual crosses to the partner and fuses with the remaining micronucleus there. The partners then separate and reproduce by binary fission.

Protozoa

Paramecium feeding



Paramecium moving (locomotion)

