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Gene silencing a powerful tool in cancer research

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The ability to disrupt the expression of a particular gene is primarily valuable to researchers in biology and medicine. Such approaches allow researchers to assess the phenotypic consequences of the specific genetic modification that has been introduced. Abolishing the function of the gene permanently or transiently has been widely used to examine the pathogenesis of cancer and its metastatic ability. These technologies have permitted researchers to distinguish between tumor suppressors and oncogenes. I will discuss the role of a cofactor to BRCA1 in the maintenance of the pluripotent state of mouse embryonic stem cells and the establishment of human tumor progression, as learned by modifying the gene locus or preventing its translation.

Biography

Asma Amleh is an Associate Professor of Developmental Biology at The American University in Cairo. She received her Ph.D. from McGill University in Montreal and did postdoctoral research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). She has also been an instructor at the Department of Molecular Medicine, Institute of Biotechnology, at the University of Texas Health Science Center and a senior research scientist at the Developmental Biology Program, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in NY. Her research interests are focused on understanding the genetic control of normal and abnormal development in the mammalian system including the incidence of cancer.