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BRCA2 protein characterized

nature

The two hereditary breast cancer susceptibility genes, *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*, have roles in responding to DNA damage. When they are mutated or absent, the outcome is genomic instability, a contributory factor to cancer development. Studies on *BRCA2* have been hampered by its large size, which made purification of the full-length protein challenging. Steve Kowalczykowski and colleagues now report the first *in vitro* characterization of full-length *BRCA2*, and delineate the different ways by which *BRCA2* facilitates RAD51-mediated homologous recombination.

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(News & Views p667, doi: 10.1038/467667a)

[Purified human BRCA2 stimulates RAD51-mediated recombination](#) (Article p678, doi: 10.1038/nature09399)

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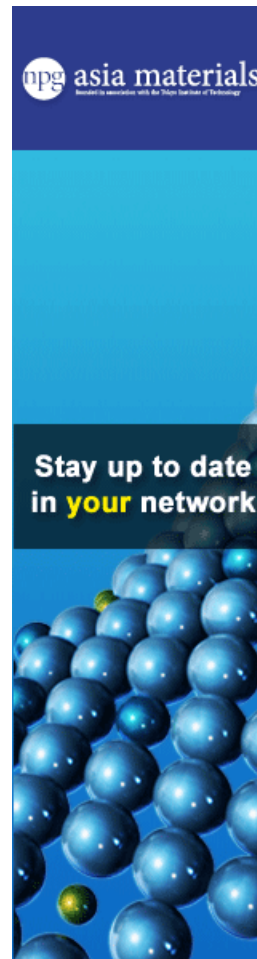
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