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Breast cancer linked to chromatin remodeling

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BRCA1 is a tumor-suppressor gene linked to familial breast and ovarian cancers. In the July 21 Cell, Bochar *et al*. find that the predominant BRCA1-containing complex in human cells is the SWI/SNF-related chromatin remodeling complex (*Cell* 2000, **102**:257-265). This may explain the multitude of properties that have been ascribed to BRCA1, including effects on transcription, DNA repair, and cell-cycle checkpoints. Mutations in SNF5, another subunit of the SWI/SNF complex, have been shown to result in aggressive pediatric cancer, and a close inspection of other SWI/SNF proteins and genes may turn up other cancer culprits.

References

1. A strong candidate for the breast and ovarian cancer susceptibility gene BRCA1.

2. Cell, [http://www.cell.com/]

3. Truncating mutations of hSNF5/INI1 in aggressive paediatric cancer.