

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Disease models			
Mutant <i>neuroblastoma Ras viral (v-Ras) oncogene (Nras)</i> mouse model of melanoma	Mice expressing activating mutations in <i>Nras</i> could help identify new treatments for melanoma. The <i>NRAS</i> Q61R and G12D activating mutations are associated with multiple human cancers. In mice, melanocyte-specific knock-in of <i>Nras</i> harboring the Q61R mutation led to formation of more melanoma tumors than melanocyte-specific knock-in of <i>Nras</i> harboring the G12D mutation. In melanocytes from the two knock-in models, activation of oncogenic pathways downstream of <i>Nras</i> were comparable, but <i>Nras</i> Q61R exhibited a higher binding affinity for GTP and consequently more sustained activation than <i>Nras</i> G12D. Next steps include studies to determine how structural differences between the two <i>Nras</i> mutations affect tumorigenesis.	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	Burd, C.E. <i>et al. Cancer Discov.</i> ; published online Sept. 24, 2014; doi:10.1158/2159-8290.CD-14-0729 Contact: Norman E. Sharpless, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, N.C. e-mail: nes@med.unc.edu
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