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Oncogenes and Tumor Suppressor Genes

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Cancer is caused by an accumulation of genetic alterations that confer a survival advantage to the neoplastic cell. J. L. Jameson(p73) Oncogenes are “[g]enes that normally play a role in growth but, when overexpressed or mutated, can foster the growth of cancer.” Oncogenes were discovered and characterized in viruses and animal experimental systems. These genes exist widely outside the systems in which they were discovered, and their normal cellular homologues are important in cell division and differentiation. Human oncogenes should be expressed according to style for human gene symbols (see , Human Gene Nomenclature). Mouse oncogenes (and other nonhuman oncogenes) should