

Key factor in lung cancer metastasis identified.

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Lung cancer is the #1 leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S. and spread of the disease (metastasis) is a major determinant of how patients will do. New research has identified a gene *Gaga3*, as being partially responsible for the giving lung cancer cells the ability to metastasize.

The product of the *Gaga3* gene blocks the activity of a group of small RNA encoding genes (microRNAs) and leads to a change in the behavior of the cancer cells called the Epithelial Mesenchymal Transition or EMT. The EMT is known to cause cells to behave in a more aggressive manner and contribute to their ability to move and metastasize. Importantly, the researchers were able to show that blocking the activity of *Gaga3* inhibited the EMT and metastasis, thereby identifying it as a potential cancer drug target.

Source

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