

# Alternative inclusion of fibroblast growth factor receptor 2 exon IIIc in Dunning prostate tumors reveals unexpected epithelial mesenchymal plasticity. <sup>[1]</sup>

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Título	Alternative inclusion of fibroblast growth factor receptor 2 exon IIIc in Dunning prostate tumors reveals unexpected epithelial mesenchymal plasticity.
Publication Type	Journal Article
Year of Publication	2006
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Journal	Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A
Volume	103
Issue	38
Pagination	14116-21
Date Published	2006 Sep 19
ISSN	0027-8424
Palabras clave	<a href="#">Alternative Splicing</a> <sup>[10]</sup> , <a href="#">Animals</a> <sup>[11]</sup> , <a href="#">Cells, Cultured</a> <sup>[12]</sup> , <a href="#">Epithelium</a> <sup>[13]</sup> , <a href="#">Exons</a> <sup>[14]</sup> , <a href="#">Female</a> <sup>[15]</sup> , <a href="#">Gene Silencing</a> <sup>[16]</sup> , <a href="#">Genes, Reporter</a> <sup>[17]</sup> , <a href="#">Lung Neoplasms</a> <sup>[18]</sup> , <a href="#">Male</a> <sup>[19]</sup> , <a href="#">Mesoderm</a> <sup>[20]</sup> , <a href="#">Neoplasm Metastasis</a> <sup>[21]</sup> , <a href="#">Prostatic Neoplasms</a> <sup>[22]</sup> , <a href="#">Protein Isoforms</a> <sup>[23]</sup> , <a href="#">Rats</a> <sup>[24]</sup> , <a href="#">Receptor, Fibroblast Growth Factor, Type 2</a> <sup>[25]</sup>

## Abstract

In epithelial cells, alternative splicing of fibroblast growth factor receptor 2 (FGFR2) transcripts leads to the expression of the FGFR2(IIIb) isoform, whereas in mesenchymal cells, the same process results in the synthesis of FGFR2(IIIc). Expression of the FGFR2(IIIc) isoform during prostate tumor progression suggests a disruption of the epithelial character of these tumors. To visualize the use of FGFR2 exon IIIc in prostate AT3 tumors in syngeneic rats, we constructed minigene constructs that report on alternative splicing. Imaging these alternative splicing decisions revealed unexpected mesenchymal-epithelial transitions in these primary tumors. These transitions were observed more frequently where tumor cells were in contact with stroma. Indeed, these transitions were frequently observed among lung micrometastases in the organ parenchyma and immediately adjacent to blood vessels. Our data suggest an unforeseen relationship between epithelial mesenchymal plasticity and malignant fitness.

DOI [10.1073/pnas.0603090103](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0603090103) <sup>[26]</sup>

Alternate Journal Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.

PubMed ID [16963563](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16963563/) <sup>[27]</sup>

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