

Of urchins and men: evolution of an alternative splicing unit in fibroblast growth factor receptor genes. ^[1]

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Abstract

Alternative splicing of mammalian transcripts, which yields many diverse protein products from one gene, is the rule and not the exception. Although the mechanisms that govern alternative splicing are being unraveled, little is known about the evolution of this critical engine of proteome diversity. Here we present a phylogenetic analysis from a sea urchin to humans of the alternative splicing unit encoding the third Ig domain of fibroblast growth factor receptors. The remarkable conservation of intronic control elements, both in structure and function, indicates that the mechanisms that regulate this alternative splicing unit evolved over 600 million years ago.

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