# Researchers create a fly to study how a normal cell turns cancerous

The wing of a fruit fly may hold the key to unraveling the genetic and molecular events that transform a normal cell into a cancerous one. The study, conducted on *Drosophila melanogaster* by scientists at the Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB Barcelona) and led by ICREA researcher Marco Milán, has reproduced each of the steps known to take place when a healthy cell turns cancerous. The researchers have thus provided an inexpensive and effective model that will allow the scientific community to scrutinize the genes and molecules involved in each step. Given that the vast majority of genes in Drosophila are conserved in mice and humans, the results obtained may also lead researchers to perform similar studies in more clinically relevant models. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA (PNAS)* has published the study online this week.

“This has allowed us to propose something that hasn’t yet been possible to study in depth and that now should be taken into serious consideration. Is genomic instability the cause of tumorigenesis?” says **Milán**.

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