Scientists find genetic switch that may fuel breast cancer's spread

Despite improvements in medical technology, doctors still struggle to tell which breast cancers are highly aggressive and likely to spread and which are slow-growing and benign.

A new study may offer a valuable clue about how cancers become aggressive. The study identifies a genetic switch that in some breast cancer cells that, when triggered, helps transform non-aggressive cells into cancer stem cells capable of proliferating and spreading. The switch, researchers found, is positioned differently in two types of breast cancer—one that has a greater survival rate, and one that is more prone to spread.

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