

## What we need to know about reports suggesting CRISPR can cause cancer

STAT's story about CRISPR-edited cells often lacking a functional gene known to prevent cancer caused a bit of a stir...

**Cut to the chase:** Is this the death knell for CRISPR? No. Not even close.

**So why are we here?** Because two studies in Nature Medicine, from two different teams of scientists studying two different uses of CRISPR in two kinds of human cells reached the same conclusion...

**That might matter why?** Because cells lacking a functional p53 have a greater chance of uncontrolled proliferation, a.k.a. cancer. Full stop, no debate.

...

**So now what do we do?** Study skeptics just dismiss the possibility that CRISPR'd cells might have cancer-causing properties. Nothing to see here; just move along! Or so some readers seemed to think.

The authors of the two papers had a different suggestion...In other words, anyone who is developing CRISPR therapies should keep an eye out for this. It would also be a good idea to study it further to see how prevalent a problem it might be.

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**That makes it sound as if the risk of a patient actually developing cancer from CRISPR'd cells is really low. How big a cancer risk might CRISPR'd cells pose?** No one has any idea, which is exactly the point of investigating further.

[Original post behind paywall]

Read full, original post: [Why reports about CRISPR'd cells and cancer aren't calamitous — but shouldn't be ignored](#)