

National Cancer Institute

at the National Institutes of Health

News

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NCI Cancer Center News

UC Davis study shows how DNA finds its match

It's been more than 50 years since James Watson and Francis Crick showed that DNA is a double helix of two strands that complement each other. But how does a short piece of DNA find its match, out of the millions of "letters" in even a small genome? New work by researchers at the University of California, Davis, handling and observing single molecules of DNA, shows how it's done. The results are published online Feb. 8 by the journal Nature. Defects in DNA repair and copying are strongly linked to cancer, birth defects and other problems.

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Among the research institutions NCI funds across the United States, it currently designates 66 as Cancer Centers. Largely based in research universities, these facilities are home to many of the NCI-supported scientists who conduct a wide range of intense, laboratory research into cancer's origins and development. The Cancer Centers Program also focuses on trans-disciplinary research, including population science and clinical research. The centers' research results are often at the forefront of studies in the cancer field.