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Survival signals

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Signalling by the c-Jun N-terminal kinase (JNK) pathway has been implicated in the cellular response to stress and the induction of apoptosis. In an Advanced Online Publication in Nature Genetics, Hess *et al.* demonstrate a clear role for JNK1 in cell survival (*Nature Genetics*, 5 August 2002, doi:10.1038/ng946). They used knockout mice lacking the *Mapk8/jnk1* gene to investigate the role of JNK signalling in B-cell transformation induced by the leukemogenic oncogene *BCR-ABL*. They observed reduced *BCR-ABL* transformation of pre-B cells *in vitro* in the absence of JNK1, and altered leukemia *in vivo*. JNK1 deletion resulted in decreased cell survival and reduced expression of the anti-apoptotic Bcl-2 protein. Restoring Bcl-2 expression, using transgenic animals, restored B-cell leukemogenesis.

References

1. The JNK signal transduction pathway.

2. *Nature Genetics*, [http://www.nature.com/ng/]