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Lipocalin killer

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Jonathan B Weitzman

Email: jonathanweitzman@hotmail.com

In the August 3 *Science*, Laxminarayana Devireddy and colleagues from the [University of Massachusetts Medical School](#) report the use of DNA microarrays to identify genes whose expression is induced during apoptosis (*Science* 2001, **293**:829-834). They studied cell death of a mouse pro-B lymphocytic cell line upon withdrawal of interleukin-3. The gene that showed the largest induction (12.6-fold) was *24p3*, which encodes a [lipocalin](#). Lipocalins are small secreted proteins, and Devireddy *et al.* found that conditioned medium from dying lymphocytes induced cell death in a range of leukocytic cells. Recombinant 24p3 protein alone could also induce lymphocyte apoptosis. The cell death induced by 24p3 probably plays a role in immune-system homeostasis and in the regulation of the inflammatory response. The authors point out how important the expression profiling approach was in leading them to a unidentified killer.

References

1. *Science* , [<http://www.sciencemag.org>]
2. University of Massachusetts Medical School , [<http://www.umassmed.edu>]
3. The Lipocalin Website, [<http://www.jenner.ac.uk/lipocalin.htm>]