compounds that are naturally present in the food we eat or are produced by the way we prepare it. Among these are the naturally occurring compounds such as N-Nitroso compounds, aflatoxins, ascaridole, etc.

These mechanisms are more complex than was initially believed and it is hoped that a better understanding of them will lead to a way of reducing the incidence of cancer as well as improving the treatment.

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Use of Viruses as Probes in the Study of DNA Repair Processes in Mammalian Cells

by
S.M. Piperakis

Department of Biology, Nuclear Research Centre "Demokritos", 15310 Agia Paraskevi, Greece

S U M M A R Y: We live in an environment which continuously threats our genetic material. Radiation from the sun and chemical agents cause alterations in the DNA which could soon have destroyed our planet, if there was not a constant cellular monitoring and repair of most of these defects. Cellular DNA is also subject to spontaneous damage that includes chemical alteration of bases, changes in base sequence due to replicative and recombinational infidelity and loss of bases. The repaire of DNA must be regarded together with replication and recombination as an essential transaction of the genetic material in all life form.

The study of the DNA damage and repair has undergone massive expansion during the past 30 years. Most of the interest in this field is due to the evidence which shows the relevance of DNA repair to human health. Damage to DNA has been clearly implicated in cancer and there are suggestions that it may be a component in the Biology of aging.

The DNA repair systems of the living organisms could be studied using a large number of modern techniques of the Molecular Biology. In the present review an analysis of the advantages of using viruses as probes for the study of DNA repair in mammalian cells is been attempted.