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## Telomere capping

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Telomeres protect the ends of chromosomes and prevent chromosomal end-to-end fusions. The DNA-dependent protein kinase (DNA-PK) has been implicated in DNA repair and telomere maintenance. In the December 18 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, David Gilley and researchers at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory report the use of knockout mice to examine the function of the DNA-PK catalytic subunit (*Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 2001, **98**:15084-15088). Analysis of fibroblast and primary cultured kidney cells lacking DNA-PK catalytic subunit revealed no changes in telomere length, but high levels of telomere fusions. These observations differ from those seen in SCID (severe combined immune deficiency) mice, which have a genetically altered DNA-PK catalytic subunit gene.

## References

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3. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, [<http://www.pnas.org>]
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