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PAR for the course

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In the January 23 [Nature](#) Sophie Martin and Daniel St Johnston from the [University of Cambridge](#), UK, show that the *Drosophila* LKB1 protein, a homolog of the PAR kinases identified for their role in *C. elegans* embryonic polarity, is required for early anterior-posterior polarity in the fly oocyte (*Nature* 2003, **421**:379-384). They performed a genetic screen for mutants that disrupt the localization of the posterior-polarized protein Stauffen. Genome mapping led them to the *lkb1* gene, which encodes a serine/threonine kinase homologous to the human [tumor suppressor LKB1](#) and the *C. elegans* [PAR-4 kinase](#) that is involved in embryonic polarity. LKB1 is phosphorylated by the related PAR-1 kinase and by protein kinase A. *Drosophila*LKB1 is essential for cell polarity in the germ line and the follicle cells

References

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2. University of Cambridge , [<http://www.cam.ac.uk>]
3. LKB1 - a master tumour suppressor of the small intestine and beyond.
4. The *C. elegans par-4 gene* encodes a putative serine-threonine kinase required for establishing embryonic asymmetry.