



# Epigenetic Regulation and Epigenomics

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## Epigenetic Regulation and Epigenomics From Brand: Wiley-Blackwell

Epigenetics is a term in biology referring to heritable traits that do not involve changes in the underlying DNA sequence of the organism. Epigenetic traits exist on top of or in addition to the traditional molecular basis for inheritance. The "epigenome" is a parallel to the word "genome," and refers to the overall epigenetic state of a cell. Cancer and stem cell research have gradually focused attention on these genome modifications. The molecular basis of epigenetics involves modifications to DNA and the chromatin proteins that associate with it. Methylation, for example, can silence a nearby gene and seems to be involved in some cancers.

Epigenetics is beginning to form and take shape as a new scientific discipline, which will have a major impact on Medicine and essentially all fields of biology. Increasingly, researchers are unearthing links between epigenetics and a number of diseases.

Although in recent years cancer has been the main focus of epigenetics, recent data suggests that epigenetic plays a critical role in psychology and psychopathology. It is being realized that normal behaviors such as maternal care and pathologies such as Schizophrenia and Alzheimer's might have an epigenetic basis. It is also becoming clear that nutrition and life experiences have epigenetic consequences.

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Robert A. Meyers obtained his Ph.D. in Chemistry at the University of California at Los Angeles. He was a post-doctoral fellow at the California Institute of Technology and has more than 17 patents, 50 technical papers and 12 books to his name. As Editor-in-Chief he conceived and edited several ambitious multivolume reference works, e.g. the Encyclopedia of Analytical Chemistry (Wiley), the Encyclopedia of Molecular Biology and Molecular Medicine (Wiley-VCH) and the Encyclopedia of Physical Science and Technology (Academic Press).

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