

# Connecting epidemiologic and genetic perspectives on cancer

Solid tumors of adults evolve through a stepwise accumulation of three or more genetic alterations, but these are not the only determinants of cancer incidence. Hereditary factors can predispose individuals to cancer, generally via an initiating mutation to all stem cells. Random, replicative errors every time a cell divides can contribute to cancers at the indicated phases of tumorigenesis. Environmental factors can play a role during all phases.

