



Article of Significant Interest in This Issue

Spt5 Phosphorylation and the Rtf1 Plus3 Domain Promote Rtf1 Function through Distinct Mechanisms

Rtf1 is an RNA polymerase II elongation factor required for cotranscriptional histone modification. Rtf1 functions downstream of Cdk9, the kinase component of positive transcription elongation factor b. This pathway involves Cdk9-dependent phosphorylation of Spt5, which creates a binding site for the Rtf1 Plus3 domain and is required for Rtf1 recruitment to chromatin. Chen et al. ([e00150-20](#)) demonstrate that the Plus3 domain also operates independently of phosphorylated Spt5 to promote Rtf1 function. This novel role involves a nucleic acid-binding Plus3 domain interface and a C-terminal region of Rtf1 previously shown to bind to the polymerase-associated factor complex.