Mutations in \textit{twinstar}, a \textit{Drosophila} Gene Encoding a Cofilin/ADF Homologue, Result in Defects in Centrosome Migration and Cytokinesis

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\textbf{Abstract.} We describe the phenotypic and molecular characterization of \textit{twinstar (tsr)}, an essential gene in \textit{Drosophila melanogaster}. Two \textit{P}-element induced alleles of \textit{tsr} (\textit{tsr}\textsuperscript{1} and \textit{tsr}\textsuperscript{2}) result in late larval or pupal lethality. Cytological examination of actively dividing tissues in these mutants reveals defects in cytokinesis in both mitotic (larval neuroblast) and meiotic (larval testis) cells. In addition, mutant spermatocytes show defects in aster migration and separation during prophase/prometaphase of both meiotic divisions. We have cloned the gene affected by these mutations and shown that it codes for a 17-kD protein in the cofilin/ADF family of small actin severing proteins. A cDNA for this gene has previously been described by Edwards et al. (1994). Northern analysis shows that the \textit{tsr} gene is expressed throughout development, and that the \textit{tsr}\textsuperscript{1} and \textit{tsr}\textsuperscript{2} alleles are hypomorphs that accumulate decreased levels of \textit{tsr} mRNA. These findings prompted us to examine actin behavior during male meiosis to visualize the effects of decreased \textit{twinstar} protein activity on actin dynamics in vivo. Strikingly, both mutants exhibit abnormal accumulations of F-actin. Large actin aggregates are seen in association with centrosomes in mature primary spermatocytes. Later, during ana/telophase of both meiotic divisions, aberrantly large and misshaped structures appear at the site of contractile ring formation and fail to disassemble at the end of telophase, in contrast with wild-type. We discuss these results in terms of possible roles of the actin-based cytoskeleton in centrosome movement and in cytokinesis.

Regulated interactions between actin and actin binding proteins provide an important structural basis for many cellular processes in eukaryotes, such as cell–cell adhesion, cell outgrowth and motility, muscle contraction, and cytokinesis. Changes in the intracellular localization and organization of actin are mediated by a repertoire of actin-associated proteins. These fall into several classes based on their effects on actin assembly and dynamics in vitro: proteins with cross-linking, bundling, capping, severing, polymerizing/depolymerizing, monomer sequestering, and motor activities have been described (reviewed by Vandekerckhove and Vancompernolle, 1992). However, defining the role that each actin-associated protein plays in vivo and how multiple activities are coordinated remains a challenging task.

Proteins in the cofilin/actin depolymerizing factor (ADF) family have been identified in a wide range of eukaryotic organisms, from yeast to plants to humans. These small molecular mass (15–20 kD) actin binding proteins constitute one of the two known classes of actin filament severing proteins; the other is comprised of the gelsolin/fragmin/villin-type proteins (see Vandekerckhove and Vancompernolle, 1992). In addition to severing, cofilin-like proteins also display actin filament and monomer binding activities in vitro. The properties of these proteins in vitro may be influenced by pH (Yoneyzawa et al., 1985; Hawkins et al., 1993; Hayden et al., 1993; Iida et al., 1993), the presence of membrane phospholipids (Yoneyzawa et al., 1990), other actin binding proteins (Nishida et al., 1984; Abe et al., 1990; Maciver et al., 1991), and in some cases, by phosphorylation of the protein itself (Morgan et al., 1993). These and other observations hint at how the activities of cofilin/ADF proteins might be regulated intracellularly.

Our current appreciation of the biochemical behavior of these molecules is not reflected by an understanding of the precise roles they play in vivo, although cofilin-like proteins are known to provide an essential function both in the yeast \textit{Saccharomyces cerevisiae} (Iida et al., 1993; Moon et al., 1993) and in the nematode \textit{Caenorhabditis elegans} (McKim et al., 1994). The yeast cofilin gene \textit{COFI} is required for spore viability and growth, but the nature of the essential function or functions that are improperly per-
Materials and Methods

**Drosophila Stocks**

The *twinstar* (*tsr*) allele was generated in a P element screen in the laboratory of Dr. J. Merriam (University of California, Los Angeles, CA) by the transposition of the single, marked P element *pLacA92* (O’Kane and Gehring, 1987). The *tsr* allele was identified by Dr. Trisha Wilson (Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA) by screening a different collection of mutations introduced with the marked P element *P-lacW* (Bier et al., 1989). Both alleles were maintained as heterozygotes as a selectable marker. Survivors were mated individually to *twinstar* (*tsr*), which encodes a cofilin/ADF homologue, and the phenotypic consequences of mutations in this gene. Animals mutant for *tsr* die at the larval-pupal boundary and exhibit frequent failures in cytokinesis in both mitotic and meiotic cells. In addition, they show abnormalities in centrosome migration to the opposite ends of spermatocyte nuclei during the two meiotic divisions. These defects appear to be related to dramatic changes observed in the actin cytoskeleton in mutant spermatocytes.

**Germline Transformation**

The 6.4-kb genomic fragment shown in Fig. 7A (RS6.4) was subcloned from Bluescript KS II+ (Stratagene Inc., La Jolla, CA) into the transfection vector pW8 (Klemenz et al., 1987) by the transposition of the single, marked P element *pLacA92* (O’Kane and Gehring, 1987). Both porcine cofilin and destrin cDNAs can rescue the viability of *S. cerevisiae* cof1 mutant spores (Iida et al., 1993). Thus, the biochemical differences seen in vitro between these proteins is insignificant for yeast cells, but multicellular eukaryotes may still require independent functions supplied by two or more members of the cofilin gene family.

In this paper, we describe both the molecular analysis of the *Drosophila* gene *twinstar* (*tsr*), which encodes a cofilin/ADF homologue, and the phenotypic consequences of mutations in this gene. Animals mutant for *tsr* die at the larval-pupal boundary and exhibit frequent failures in cytokinesis in both mitotic and meiotic cells. In addition, they show abnormalities in centrosome migration to the opposite ends of spermatocyte nuclei during the two meiotic divisions. These defects appear to be related to dramatic changes observed in the actin cytoskeleton in mutant spermatocytes.

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Cytology

**Larval Neuroblasts.** Homozygous *tsr* larvae were selected from stocks or crosses in which mutant *tsr* alleles were balanced over the *TSTL1* translocation. Because this balancer carries the dominant larval marker *Tubby* (*Tb*), homozygous mutant individuals (phenotypically non-*Tb*) can be unambiguously distinguished from heterozygous *tsr/TSTL1* larvae (phenotypically *Tb*). Mutant and control brains were dissected, fixed, and squashed in aceto-orcein according to our usual procedure (Gatti and Baker, 1989). The optic field chosen for this analysis is the circular area defined by a phase-contrast Neofluar 100× oil-immersion Zeiss objective, using 10× oculars with the Optovar set at 1.25× (Carl Zeiss, Inc., Thornwood, NY).

**Larval Testes.** To examine spermatid morphology in live material, larval testes were dissected in testis isolation buffer (183 mM KCl, 47 mM NaCl, 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 6.8) and gently squashed in 2 μl of the same buffer under a 20×20 coverslip. These live preparations were immediately scored by phase contrast microscopy.

Two different procedures were used for cytological analysis of fixed testes. For simultaneous tubulin immunostaining and Hoechst 33258 staining, testes were fixed and processed as described by Cenci et al. (1994); tubulin was detected using an anti-α-tubulin Ab raised against chick brain microtubules (Amersham Corp., Arlington Heights, IL; Blose et al., 1982). For simultaneous visualization of chromatin, microtubules, and F-actin, testes squashes were prepared according to Cenci et al. (1994), but after freezing in liquid nitrogen and removal of the coverslip, squashes were fixed for 10 min by immersion in ethanol precooled at −20°C, followed by a 7-min treatment with freshly made 3.7% formaldehyde in PBS. Slides were then washed twice in PBS (5 min each) and immersed for 30 min in PBT (PBS + 0.1% Triton-X 100). After this treatment, they were incubated for 1 h with anti-α-tubulin monoclonal Ab diluted 1:50 in PBS, washed two times in PBS (5 min each), and then incubated for 1 h with the secondary antibody (sheep anti-mouse IgG, F(ab), fragment, conjugated with 5(6)-carboxy-fluorescein-N-hydroxysuccinimide ester [FLUOS], no. 1214616; Boehringer Mannheim) diluted 1:15 in PBS. Tubulin immunostained slides, after two 5-min washes in PBS, were incubated for 2 h at 37°C in rhodamine-labeled phallolidin (Molecular Probes, Eugene, Oregon) dissolved in PBS (100 μl of the stock solution were vacuum dried and dissolved in 200 μl PBS). After a quick wash in PBS, slides were stained with Hoechst 33258 and mounted as described by Cenci et al. (1994).

Fluorescence Microscopy

Preparations stained with Hoechst 33258 and anti-tubulin Ab plus FLUOS-conjugated secondary Ab were examined with a Zeiss III photomicroscope equipped for epifluorescence with an HBO 100W mercury lamp (Osrarn). Hoechst 33258 and FLUOS fluorescence were detected using the 0.1 (BP 365/11, FT 395, LP 397) and the 0.9 (BP 450-490, FT 510, LP 420) Zeiss filter sets, respectively. Photomicrographs were recorded on Kodak T-MAX 100 film.

Preparations stained with Hoechst 33258, anti-tubulin Ab plus FLUOS-conjugated secondary Ab, and rhodamine-labeled phallolidin were examined with a Zeiss Axioplan microscope equipped for epifluorescence with an HBO 50W mercury lamp (Osram) and with a cooled charge-coupled device (Photometrics Inc., Woburn, MA). Hoechst 33258, FLUOS, and rhodamine fluorescence were detected with the 0.1, 0.0 (BP 450-490, FT 510, LP 515-565) and 15 (BP 546, FT 580, LP 590) Zeiss filter sets, respectively. The fluorescence signals were recorded separately as gray-scale digital images using IP Lab Spectrum software. Images were then converted to Photoshop format (Adobe Systems, Inc., Mountain View, CA), pseudocolored, and merged.

Nucleic Acids

Molecular techniques not specifically outlined here were performed using standard protocols (Sambrook et al., 1989).

Isolation of *twinstar* Genomic and cDNAs. 0.5 μg of total genomic DNA isolated from heterozygous *twinstar* adults was digested with *Sau3A* (for *tsr*1) in with either EcoR1 or PstI (for *tsr*2). The DNA was precipitated with ethanol, dried, and then resuspended in 400 μl of DNA ligation buffer. Circular DNA containing one end of the P element adjacent to *twinstar* genomic sequences was cloned by one of two methods. For *tsr*1, the ligation was amplified with primers from the P element ends using an
inverse PCR protocol (Ochman et al., 1988). The PCR product was di-
gested with restriction enzymes unique to the PCR primers and cloned
into Bluescript KS II+. The full-length eDNA was isolated from a 0-4-h embryonic library (Brown and Kafatos, 1988) using
genomic fragment RS6.4 (Fig. 7 A) as a probe. Sequencing of Genomic and cDNA. Sequencing of double-stranded plas-
mid DNA was performed by the dideoxy method (Sanger et al., 1977) us-
ing Sequenase version 2.0 (United States Biochemical Corp., Cleveland,
OH) or the Ladderman kit (Takara Biochemical Inc., Berkeley, CA).

**Results**

**Identification of the twinstar Locus**

We have previously described a screening procedure to identify mutations causing aberrations during mitosis (Gatti and Baker, 1989; Gatti and Goldberg, 1991). One would expect that homozygosity for mutations in many genes en-
coding components of the mitotic apparatus would result in lethal-
y in larval (third instar) or pupal stages. This is because the heterozygous mother of homozygous mu-
tant individuals would contribute maternally supplied prod-
ucts to enable the earliest rounds of embryonic and larval
mitosis to proceed. However, metamorphosis could not oc-
cur because the homozygous mutant zygotic genome would
be unable to direct the synthesis of these molecules in
imaginal discs, histoblasts, or in the larval brain. Examina-
tion of cell division in mutant larval brains would there-
fore reveal potential mitotic defects. This strategy has been used with considerable success to identify a variety of mitotic mutations in Drosophila (reviewed by Ripoll et al., 1987; Glover, 1989; Gatti and Goldberg, 1991).

We identified the mutation twinstar (tsr) by screening a col-
collection of recessive, larval/pupal lethal mutations for
mitotic abnormalities in larval brains; the mutation twinstar (tsr)
was recovered in a similar manner in the laboratory of Dr. M. Fuller (Stanford University School of Medicine, Palo Alto, CA) by screening a different collection of muta-
tions (see Materials and Methods). tsr' and tsr' mutants ex-
hibit similar mitotic phenotypes (see below) and fail to com-
plement for both lethality and cytologically detectable
mitotic defects.

On the basis of several criteria, the twinstar gene defined by
these two mutations is located near the border between
polytene chromosome intervals 60 A and 60 B (bands 60 A-
60 B1). First, probes containing P element-specific sequences
hybridize only to this location in tsr' and tsr' mutant sall-
vary gland chromosome squashes (data not shown). Sec-
ond, deficiency mapping of tsr mutations places the gene in
the region 60 A-8-16 (Fig. 1). Experiments kindly performed
by Dr. Bruce Reed (Whitehead Institute, Cambridge,
MA) have established that the tsr mutations are not allelic
to any of the large number of genes he has previously
characterized in this interval of chromosome 2 R. Thus,
twinstar represents a new lethal complementation group in
this region. Finally, both alleles have been reverted by
transposase-mediated excision of the P elements (see Bel-
en et al., 1989; Gatti and Goldberg, 1991), demonstrat-
ing that the P element insertions in the 60 A10-60 B1 inter-
val are in fact the cause of both the tsr' and tsr' mutations.

**The Cytological Phenotype of Twinstar Mutant Neuroblasts**

In larval neuroblasts of tsr'/tsr', tsr'/tsr', and tsr'/tsr' indi-
viduals, the major cytological consequence of lesions in the
twinstar gene is the appearance of a significant proportion
of polyplid cells (Fig. 2; Table I). Other aspects of mito-
sis appear to be largely unaffected. The mitotic index, a pa-
rameter measuring the frequency of cells engaged in mito-
sis, is nearly normal (Table I). The percentages of mitotic
cells that are in anaphase in mutants are very similar to
wild-type. Chromosomes in mutant neuroblasts seem to be
normal: we see no evidence of irregular chromosome con-
densation or of chromosome breakage (Gatti and Baker,
1989).

The phenotype observed in both tsr' and tsr' brains is
similar to that associated with mutations in a variety of

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Figure 1. Deficiency mapping of the twinstar locus. twinstar fails to complement Df(2R)orBR-6 (59D5-10;60B3-8) and Df(2R)orBR-11 (59F6-8;60A8-16) (filled bars), but does complement Df(2R)bw546 (59D8-11;60A7) and Df(2R)G10-BR-27 (59F3;60A8-16) (open bars). Stretches of DNA that are absent in deficiency strains are represented by solid bars, with uncertainties in deficiency breakpoint ends indicated by crosshatching; the twinstar locus is thus contained within the shaded region (60A8-16). The right-hand breakpoint of Df(2R)orBR-11 is shown to be distal to that of Df(2R)G10-BR-27 based on genetic mapping against other complementation groups in this region (Dr. Bruce Reed, personal communication). Probes containing sequences found within the P element transposons also hybridize to the region 60A10-60B1 in squashes of salivary gland chromosomes (not shown).

genes that cause defects in cytokinesis (Gatti and Baker, 1989; Karess et al., 1991; Castrillon and Wasserman, 1994; Neufeld and Rubin, 1994). Successive failures in cytokinesis would result in cells that increase their ploidy geometrically, giving rise to large polyploid cells such as that shown in Fig. 2 d. The normality of other mitotic parameters suggests that these lesions in the twinstar gene do not significantly alter other mitotic processes. An example of this specificity is shown in Fig. 2 e, which demonstrates that polyploid cells, which must already be depleted for normal tsr" function, are nonetheless able to enter anaphase. Fig. 2 f shows an anaphase spindle that is multipolar due to the retention of several centrosomes in a single cell, another expected result of failures in cytokinesis.

Meiotic Aberrations Associated with Mutations in twinstar

Male meiosis offers a particularly suitable system for the analysis of the cytological consequences of mutations affecting cell division. Primary spermatocyte nuclei are ~25 times larger than neuroblast nuclei and exhibit comparatively larger spindles that can be clearly detected by tubulin immunostaining. We have recently provided a detailed description of chromosome and microtubule organization during wild-type male meiosis, which we have been able to subdivide into cytologically well-defined stages (Cenci et al., 1994). Because meiosis occurs in the testes of third in-

Figure 2. Mitotic defects in larval neuroblasts of tsr mutants. (a) Diploid female metaphase and (b) diploid anaphase from Oregon R controls. (c) Tetraploid metaphase, (d) highly polyploid metaphase, (e) tetraploid anaphase, and (f) tripolar polyploid anaphase from tsr+/tsr larval brains. Bar, 5 μm.
star larvae, we were able to analyze the meiotic divisions in mutant tsr larvae for potential aberrations.

**Improper Aster Migration during Prophase/Prometaphase of Both Meiotic Divisions.** A unique phenotypic consequence of lesions in twinstar occurs in primary spermatocytes at the prophase/prometaphase transition of meiosis I, and is revealed when fixed mutant testes are stained with antibodies directed against tubulin. In wild-type males, centrosomes reside just under the plasma membrane throughout most of the primary spermatocyte stage (see Fig. 10 below), during which growth and gene expression prepare the cell for subsequent morphological differentiation (Tates, 1971; reviewed by Fuller, 1993). Near the end of this spermatocyte maturation phase, duplicated centrosomes (each containing a pair of centrioles) migrate together to the nuclear membrane, where they nucleate prominent asters (Tates, 1971; Cenci, 1994; see also Fig. 9 c below). During late prophase/early prometaphase of the first meiotic division (stage M1a), the two asters separate from each other and migrate around the periphery of the nuclear envelope, in preparation for the establishment of the bipolar spindle. By early prometaphase, asters are located directly opposite each other on either side of the nucleus, in close apposition to the nuclear membrane. Wild-type spermatocytes at the M1a stage are shown in Fig. 3 a.

In tsr spermatocytes at the M1a stage, the two asters often remain in close proximity to each other and fail to associate with the nuclear envelope (Fig. 3 b). We have named the twinstar gene after this characteristic aberrant arrangement of asters. This effect occurs in a very high proportion of tsr primary spermatocytes, approaching 100% in tsr mutants (Table II), but is almost never seen in wild-type. Somewhat later, in the M1b stage, asters in tsr mutants can be seen to separate slightly (Fig. 3 c), but remain unassociated with the nuclear membrane.

It is remarkable that subsequent to the M1 stage, the spindles in tsr mutant spermatocytes progressively resume a relatively normal position and appearance and seem indistinguishable from wild-type throughout the remainder of the first meiotic division (Fig. 4). However, after com-
Table II. Meiotic Abnormalities in tsr Mutants

| Genotype   | Asters in prometaphase I | Asters in prometaphase II | Spermatids* |
|------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
|            | Normal | Irregular* | % Irregular | Normal | Irregular* | % Irregular | 1:1 | 2:1 | 3:1 and 4:1 | % Irregular |
| tsrl/tsrl  | 2      | 117       | 98.3        | 34     | 91       | 72.8        | 422 | 108 | 73           | 30.0        |
| tsr2/tsr2  | 12     | 104       | 89.6        | 31     | 56       | 64.3        | 602 | 23  | 5            | 4.4         |
| Oregon R   | 99     | 2         | 2.0         | 98     | 2        | 2.0         | 200 | 0   | 0            | 0.0         |

*Irregular positioning and/or delayed migration of asters.
*Ratios refer to number of nuclei per Nebenkern. 1:1, regular spermatids containing one nucleus and one Nebenkern of similar size.
Failures in cytokinesis are revealed by other patterns (see text): 2:1, two nuclei associated with one large Nebenkern. 3:1 and 4:1, three or four nuclei associated with one large Nebenkern.

The completion of meiosis I, tsr prophase/prometaphase secondary spermatocytes (stage M6a and M6b) exhibit the same defect in aster migration and positioning observed in primary spermatocytes (Fig. 5). Here again, the spindles become more normal by metaphase II and retain a wild-type structure throughout the remainder of meiosis II. Although telophase II tsr spindle structures look normal, we often observed an aberrant cross-like configuration of meiotic spindles that overlap at the midbody (Fig. 5 j). Most likely this arrangement reflects a failure of the first meiotic cytokinesis and the consequent occurrence of two second divisions within the same cell (see below).

The analysis of hundreds of ana-telophases of tsr mutants showed no evidence of irregular chromosome segregation during either meiotic division. We never observed lagging chromosomes or daughter nuclei of different size. In addition, tsr “onion stage” spermatids exhibit a uniform nuclear size (see below). As it has been demonstrated that spermatid nuclear size is proportional to chromosome content (González et al., 1989), this observation reinforces the conclusion that tsr does not affect chromosome segregation.

Failure of Cytokinesis during Spermatogenesis in twinstar Larvae. During both meiotic divisions in wild-type spermatocytes, mitochondria associate lengthwise along the spindle apparatus (see Figs. 4 and 5; Cenci et al., 1994), which is pinched in half during cytokinesis, ensuring an even distribution of these organelles to each of the two daughter cells. Immediately after completion of meiosis, the mitochondria associated with each hemispindle fuse and form an interlaced conglomerate called the Nebenkern. Thus, each newly formed wild-type spermatid (referred to as the onion stage) consists of a round, phase-light nucleus associated with a single phase-dark Nebenkern of similar size (Fig. 5 o; reviewed by Fuller, 1993).

The most obvious defect in tsr mutants is seen in spermatids at the onion stage. In tsr mutant testes, a substantial fraction of onion stage spermatids contain a single Nebenkern much larger than normal, along with four normal-sized nuclei (Fig. 5 q; Table II). This phenotype re-

Figure 4. First meiotic division in tsr mutants. The three panels show the same partial cyst containing primary spermatocytes at different meiotic stages. (Left) Phase contrast; (middle) anti-tubulin staining; (right) Hoechst 33258 staining of DNA. 1 and 2, spermatocytes in early meiotic prometaphase (M1b stage) showing delayed migration and abnormal positioning of asters. 3, prometaphase (stage M2), and 4, metaphase (stage M3) spermatocytes in which the asters have almost attained a regular bipolar arrangement. 5, a morphologically normal mid-anaphase (stage M6b). Bar, 10 µm.

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Figure 5. Second meiotic division and postmeiotic stages in tsr mutants. a-f show partial secondary spermatocyte cysts observed by phase contrast microscopy (a–c) and after immunostaining with anti-tubulin Abs (d–f). (a and d) Prometaphase II (stage M7) spermatocytes from Oregon R controls with normally positioned asters. (b and e, c and f) The same stage from tsrl/tsrl males showing delayed migration and abnormal positioning of asters. g–n show meiotic cells immunostained with anti-tubulin Abs (g–j) or stained with Hoechst 33258 (k–n). (g and k) A metaphase cell in the M9 stage in which the asters have almost attained a regular bipolar arrangement. (h and l) An early anaphase (stage M10a), and (i and m) an early telophase (stage M11), both with regular spindles. (j and n) Two late telophase II occurring in the same cytoplasm, showing overlapped central spindles. o–r show living spermatids at the onion stage observed with phase contrast. (o) Regular spermatids from Oregon R controls with nuclei (white discs) and Nebenkerns (dark discs) of similar sizes. (p–r) Spermatids from tsr mutants showing large Nebenkerns associated with (p) two, (q) four, or (r) three nuclei. See text for details on the origin of these aberrant spermatids. Bar, 10 μm.

reflects a failure of cytokinesis at both meiosis I and II, as this would prevent proper subdivision of the mitochondrial complement into four Nebenkerns (reviewed by Fuller, 1993). We also see cells with two normal-sized nuclei in association with an intermediate-size Nebenkern (Fig. 5 p; Table II), indicating a failure of cytokinesis at only one of the meiotic divisions. Because failure of cytokinesis in the first meiotic division would lead to cells containing two second division meiotic spindles (see Fig. 5, j and n) that would probably encounter further difficulties in cytokinesis, we believe that the spermatids with one Nebenkern and two nuclei are the result of second division cytokinesis failure. Finally, we observe spermatids containing one large Nebenkern plus three nuclei that are usually located in close proximity to a cell containing a normal-size Nebenkern and a single regular nucleus (Fig. 5 r; Table II). These are most likely to arise if the four hemispindles in secondary spermatocytes derived from cytokinesis I failures (see again Fig. 5, j and n) orient in such a way that mitochondrial fusion occurs asymmetrically, yielding a small and a large Nebenkern associated with one and three nuclei, respectively.

Molecular Analysis of the twinstar Gene

Molecular Cloning and Transcriptional Analysis of twinstar. A small stretch of DNA adjacent to the P element insertion in tsrI was initially cloned using an inverse PCR protocol and then used to screen a wild-type Drosophila genomic library. A 6.4-kb EcoRI-Sall subclone from this library (RS6.4) surrounds the tsrI and tsrII P element insertion sites (Fig. 6 A). Whole genome Southern analysis confirmed the presence of P element insertions within this fragment in both tsr mutant alleles that were absent from Gunsalus et al. 2023. Centrosome Migration and Cytokinesis Require tsr+ 1249
The level of the single transcript detected by RS6.4 is decreased in homozygous tsr\(^1\) and tsr\(^2\) mutants to no more than 20% of wild-type and is restored to wild-type levels in rescued lines (Fig. 7 A). This transcript is expressed during all stages of Drosophila development, is found in both adult males and females, and appears to peak in late larval and pupal stages (Fig. 7 B). On the basis of these and other data (see below), we believe that this cDNA represents the twinstar transcript.

We have determined the entire nucleotide sequence of RS6.4 and that of an homologous 750-bp cDNA clone (Fig. 6 B). The putative polyA addition signal sequence is underlined. Since the sequence shown corresponds to part of the sequence from the 6.4 kb of RS6.4, this figure uses a nucleotide numbering scheme that is relative to the entire fragment. Genbank accession numbers: twinstar cDNA, U24490; genomic fragment RS6.4, U24676.

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**Figure 6.** Molecular analysis of twinstar. (A) Physical map of the twinstar genomic region. The 6.4-kb genomic fragment used to rescue the twinstar mutants (RS6.4) is shown. Approximate positions of the P elements causing the tsr\(^1\) and tsr\(^2\) alleles are indicated. The twinstar cDNA (open boxes and arrow), when mapped onto the genomic fragment, is interrupted by one large (1.5 kb) and two small (72 bp and 63 bp) introns (Fig. 6), which are flanked by consensus splice donor and acceptor sites (Cavener, 1987). A 5' cap site occurs 52 bases upstream from the polyA stretch found in the cDNA. The direction of transcription is from left to right in this diagram; we do not know the transcriptional polarity relative to the chromosome as a whole. Restriction sites shown: EcoR1 (R), XhoI (At), BamH1 (B), PstI (P), SmaI (M), SalI (S). (B) Excerpts from the DNA sequence of RS6.4, showing regions containing the P element insertion sites and the putative polyA addition signal sequence. Arrowheads mark insertion sites of the P elements causing the tsr\(^1\) and tsr\(^2\) alleles. These are located 19 bp apart: the tsr\(^2\) insertion site occurs 5 bp within the 5'UTR of the cDNA, while that of tsr\(^2\) lies just upstream. cDNA sequence is in boldface type; coding regions are in capital letters, with one letter amino acid codes centered beneath each codon. Genomic sequences not present in the cDNA are italicized. The cDNA carries one noncoding G at the 5' end (not pictured). The putative polyA addition signal sequence is underlined. Since the sequence shown corresponds to part of the sequence from the 6.4 kb of RS6.4, this figure uses a nucleotide numbering scheme that is relative to the entire fragment. Genbank accession numbers: twinstar cDNA, U24490; genomic fragment RS6.4, U24676.
pupae; adult males; adult females. 5 ~g of polyA+-selected RNA

Figure 7. Northern analysis of twinstar mRNA. (A) Expression of twinstar in mutant and rescued lines. Lane 1, wild type (Oregon R); lane 2, tsr/tsr; lane 3, tsr/tsr, lane 4, tsr/tsr, [pW8-tsr-1]; lane 5, tsr/tsr, [pW8-tsr-1]/[pW8-tsr-1]. Lanes 2 and 3 are tsr mutant strains; lanes 4 and 5 are the same tsr mutant lines that have been rescued with wild-type genomic DNA spanning the tsr locus (see text). On this blot, tsr expression in the mutants appears negligible, but we estimate from additional experiments that mutants may contain a residual level of tsr mRNA up to 20% of wild-type. 10 µg of total RNA isolated from third instar larvae were loaded in each lane. RNA molecular weight standards (in kb) are indicated at left. (B) Developmental expression of twinstar in wild-type animals raised at 25°C. Lanes: 0-24 h embryos; first and second instar larvae; third instar larvae; early pupae; late pupae; adult males; adult females. 5 µg of polyA+-selected RNA were loaded in each lane. (C) The same blot as in B hybridized with rp49 cDNA as a loading control.

(Mount, 1982). The cDNA carries one additional non-transcribed G at the 5' end, which is thought to represent reverse transcription of the 5'-methyl-G cap during cDNA synthesis (Brown et al., 1989; Ketchum et al., 1990; Karess et al., 1991; Rose and Weischaus, 1992). No other significant open reading frames were found in RS6.4, in correspondence with its hybridization to only a single RNA species on Northern blots.

By direct sequencing of mutant DNA, we determined the precise locations of the P element insertions causing the tsr1 and tsr2 mutations to be 19 bp apart, in or very near the beginning of the tsr transcript (Fig. 6 B). The longest product produced by RACE (rapid amplification of cDNA ends) using RNA isolated from wild-type embryos or third instar larvae extends five bases beyond the cDNA 5' end (data not shown). This places the tsr1 insertion site within the mRNA 5'-untranslated region (5'-UTR) and suggests that the tsr2 insertion point would appear to be a few nucleotides upstream of the start of twinstar transcription. However, we do not know precisely where tsr mRNA transcription is initiated, nor do we see an obvious TATA box.

To investigate how detectable (though reduced) amounts of normal-sized tsr mRNA could be produced in mutant animals when at least one of the P element insertion sites appears to be located within the transcribed region, we also analyzed RACE products from homozygous tsr1 and tsr2 larvae. These products contain short (78-126 bp) unique sequences at their 5' ends that appear to be spliced into the normal cDNA 5' end. tsr1 and tsr2 products contain a 3'-untranslated region (3'-UTR) that is shorter (70-126 bp) than the normal cDNA 3' end. The 3' ends of the cDNA are not conserved at all, and it is not clear whether they are derived from an autogenous promoter or from a transcribed region.

Actin Behavior in tsr Mutants

The finding that twinstar encodes a Drosophila coflin homologue prompted us to compare actin behavior in tsr mutant and wild-type testes (Figs. 9–11). We consider first F-actin distribution within primary spermatocytes through early anaphase of the first meiotic division. In cysts of wild-type spermatocytes (stage S1), actin forms a ribbon-like pattern that connects adjacent cells (Fig. 9 a); we believe this corresponds to an analog of the fomc, a structure that extends through the ring canals of developing oocytes (Lin et al., 1994). These ribbons gradually disassemble, so that in mature primary spermatocytes (stage S5), actin is only found in a loose network of cables and spots (Fig. 9, b and c). Little or no F-actin staining is visible by the time wild-type primary spermatocytes enter prometaphase (stage M1); Fig. 9 c; see also Fig. 11 a) or later through early anaphase of the first meiotic division (to stage M4b; Fig. 11 b and data not shown). Testes from twinstar mutants exhibit an actin staining pattern that is similar to that of wild-type through the mature primary spermatocyte stage (stage S5;
Comparison of the putative twinstar protein with members of the same family of small actin-severing proteins from other organisms. Sequences shown, from top down: D. melanogaster twinstar, C. elegans Unc60B (McKim et al., 1994), S. cerevisiae COF1 (Iida et al., 1993; Moon et al., 1993), A. castellanii actophorin (Quirk et al., 1993), L. longiflorum ADF (Kim et al., 1993), human and porcine destrin (Moriyama et al., 1990b; Hawkins et al., 1993). Overline bars indicate putative functional domains. The region defined by the shaded bar has been implicated in actin binding based on mutational (Moriyama et al., 1992), cross-linking (Yonezawa et al., 1991a), and peptide inhibition studies (Yonezawa et al., 1991b). This region also interacts with certain phosphoinositides (Moriyama et al., 1992; Yonezawa et al., 1991b). The vertebrate sequence in the region indicated by the filled bar, DAIKKK, is identical to residues 2–7 at the NH2 terminus of tropomyosin (Cho et al., 1990) and can compete with it for binding to actin (Yonezawa et al., 1989). The hatched bar represents a putative nuclear localization signal sequence present in vertebrate homologues that is similar to that of SV40 large T antigen (Matsuzaki et al., 1988).

Fig. 10 a and data not shown). Immediately afterwards, however, the distribution of actin in twinstar mutants becomes dramatically different from that in wild-type: at the S6 stage (a rapid phase of transition between the end of spermatocyte growth and the onset of meiosis), mutant primary spermatocytes develop a single large F-actin aggregate in the cytoplasm of each cell (Fig. 10, a and c). This actin cluster (which we term a type 1 aggregate) rapidly forms near the centrosomes at the cell cortex, just at the time they first begin to nucleate microtubules (Fig. 10, b and c). This aggregate remains in the vicinity of the asters when they assume their ectopic position in mutant primary spermatocytes at prometaphase (stage M1; Fig. 10 a; see also Fig. 11 e). The fact that little or no F-actin staining is seen in primary spermatocytes at the S5 stage immediately before the formation of type 1 aggregates indicates that this type of actin cluster is not simply a remnant of a previously formed actin structure in these mutant cells. At metaphase (stage M3), the actin cluster in twinstar mutant primary spermatocytes dissociates from the asters and is usually seen at the equator of the cell (Fig. 11 f). During early anaphase, type 1 aggregates essentially disappear (data not shown).

Additional differences in actin behavior become apparent by late anaphase/early telophase (stages M4c-M5). In wild-type, actin becomes concentrated at the spindle midzone where it forms a ring-like structure that contracts as the cell progresses toward telophase (Fig. 11, c and d). In twinstar mutants, actin also concentrates at the mid-zone of the central spindle at this time (Fig. 11 g). This actin focus (a type 2 aggregate) is more prominent than the wild-type contractile ring and exhibits unusual protruberances generally oriented along the central spindle axis. Type 2 aggregates are also more stable than normal contractile rings. Contractile rings in wild-type disassemble at the end of the first meiotic division (stage M5/M6), and wild-type secondary spermatocytes do not exhibit prominent actin structures from interphase to mid-anaphase (stages M6-M10b; data not shown). In contrast, type 2 aggregates persist until metaphase II (stage M9), often even increasing in size. Sometimes, a type 2 aggregate is found associated with the metaphase II spindle in only one of the two daughter cells produced by the first meiotic division (Fig. 11 h), but is more often found associated with the spindles in both daughter cells (Fig. 11 i). As the second meiotic division proceeds into anaphase II, type 2 aggregates eventually disassemble (not shown).

A final difference between actin behavior in wild-type
Figure 9. Actin behavior in Oregon-R wild-type primary spermatocytes through prometaphase (stages S1 to M1). To visualize tubulin, actin and DNA, testes were immunostained with anti-tubulin Abs (green) and then sequentially stained with rhodamine-labeled phalloidin (red) and Hoechst 33258 (blue). The fluorescent signals were detected separately by a cooled charge-coupled camera and merged in pseudocolors. Yellow and orange colors indicate overlap of actin and microtubule signals. (a) Partial cyst containing S1/S2 young primary spermatocytes. F-actin staining of structures connecting adjacent cells is apparent; we suggest these structures are fusome analogs (see text). (b) Near mature primary spermatocytes (stage S4) showing actin spots and cables. (c) Spermatocytes at stages S3, S5, and M1. Note that phalloidin staining gradually disappears during these stages of development, and is absent in wild-type M1 cells. Bar, 10 μm.

and mutant meiosis becomes apparent by late anaphase and telophase of the second meiotic division (stages M10c-M11). In wild-type, F-actin is localized in a clearly visible contractile ring that disappears after completion of the second meiotic division (data not shown). At the corresponding stages in twinstar mutants, an F-actin containing structure (type 3 aggregate) assembles at the spindle midzone. This type 3 aggregate, like the type 2 aggregate, is more prominent than the wild-type contractile ring and has protuberances oriented along the spindle axis (Fig. 11 j). Moreover, the type 3 aggregate does not disappear at the end of the second meiotic division, but persists until the onion stage, disassembling only during spermatid elongation (not shown).

We analyzed actin behavior in both tsr1 and tsr2 mutant testes, and in both cases we observed the pattern described above. The only detectable differences between the two mutant alleles are in the size and morphology of the aberrant actin aggregates. The type 1 aggregate of tsr2 is somewhat smaller than that of tsr1. Similarly, the type 2 and type 3 aggregates of tsr2 tend to be less prominent and are more regular in shape than those observed in tsr1.
Figure 10. Actin behavior in twinstar mutant primary spermatocytes through prophase/prometaphase (stages S5 to M1). Pseudocolors as in Fig. 9. (a) Partial cyst containing S5, S6 and M1 mutant primary spermatocytes. Note that F-actin clusters are absent in S5 mature spermatocytes, but are prominent in S6 spermatocytes and in M1 prometaphase cells (type 1 aggregates). (b and c) S6 stage primary spermatocytes visualized with anti-tubulin antibodies (b) show the nascent asters in a particularly favorable preparation (arrows). The same field is shown in c with both anti-tubulin antibodies and rhodamine-labeled phalloidin to show association of type 1 actin aggregates with nascent asters. Bar, 10 μm.

Discussion

Structural Features of the twinstar Protein

Based on primary sequence similarity, the relatedness of the twinstar protein to known members of the cofilin/ADF family of actin severing/depolymerizing factors is unambiguous. Furthermore, preliminary biochemical data (Dr. S. K. Maciver, MRC, Cambridge, England, personal communication) have shown that bacterially expressed twinstar protein is able to bind and sever actin filaments, and that these activities are comparable to those of other previously characterized cofilins. Thus, twinstar protein behaves in vitro in a manner that is consistent with expectation. This implies that the functionality of conserved domains known to be important for actin binding and depolymerizing activities is retained in twinstar.

The structural features that govern the biochemical activities of cofilin-like proteins have not been completely characterized, nor is it clear how the different properties displayed by these proteins influence actin dynamics in different cellular environments. As one illustration, why certain cofilins show pH-dependent activity is not known, but it is thought that this feature might contribute to cytoskeletal changes seen upon alkalinization of the cytoplasm in response to cell activation by growth factors (see Sun et al., 1995). Nonetheless, several conserved motifs present in cofilin-like proteins are clearly implicated in specialized functions that may influence their activities. For example, one of the actin-binding domains identified in vertebrate homologues (Fig. 8, filled bar), which is well conserved in twinstar, competes with tropomyosin for binding to actin in vitro. This region may underlie the ability of vertebrate cofilins to compete for actin binding with tropomyosin, myosin, and villin headpiece in vitro (Nishida et al., 1984; Nishida et al., 1985; Pope et al., 1994). We might therefore expect to find that twinstar also displays similar activities, which could be important for its function in vivo.

In addition, the actin depolymerizing activities of mammalian cofilin and destrin/ADF, yeast cofilin, and Acanthamoeba actophorin are specifically inhibited by certain phosphoinositides, which bind cofilin and displace it from actin (Yonezawa et al., 1990, 1991b; Iida et al., 1993; Moon et al., 1993; Quirk et al., 1993). Phospholipid binding may help maintain proteins near the plasma membrane and could potentially be involved in regulating their activity in vivo. One of the motifs present in cofilins that is known to bind actin is also critical for phospholipid binding (Fig. 8, shaded bar). This same motif also influences the ability of cofilin to inhibit hydrolysis of phospholipids by phospholipase C (Yonezawa et al., 1991a, b), an important enzyme linking phospholipid metabolism with cellular signaling cascades. We do not know whether twinstar activity is influenced by phosphoinositides, but based on the wide range of organisms in which this property is retained, the possibility seems likely. Other actin-binding proteins such as profilin and gelsolin also interact specifically with certain phosphoinositides (Lassing and Lindberg, 1985, 1988; Janmey and Stossel, 1987). However, the interaction of cofilins with phosphoinositides appears to be of both lower affinity and specificity than that of profilin, and the relevance of this feature in vivo remains to be established.

Finally, mammalian and avian cofilins and ADFs contain a motif, PXXXKKRK (Fig. 8, hatched bar), that is very similar to the nuclear localization signal sequence of SV-40 large T antigen (Matsuzaki, et al., 1988). This se-
Figure 11. Actin behavior in wild-type and twinstar mutant spermatocytes from prometaphase through the completion of meiosis (stages M1 to M11). a–d are from Oregon R control testes; e–j are from tsr1/tsr males. Pseudocolors as in Fig. 9. (a) Late prophase I (stage M1a) and (b) metaphase I (stage M3) wild-type primary spermatocytes without prominent actin structures. (c and d) Telophase I cells at the M5 stage showing contractile actomyosin rings at the central spindle midzones. Depending upon the angle of observation, these structures either appear as bars (c) or exhibit a circular shape (d). (e) Mutant tsr1/tsr primary spermatocyte at the M1 stage, showing a prominent type 1 aggregate; compare with a of this figure. (f) Three metaphase I figures in the M3 stage associated with actin clusters (type 1 aggregates); compare with b of this figure. (g) A telophase I (M5 stage) showing a prominent and abnormally shaped actin ring (type 2 aggregate); compare with c and d of this figure. (h) Two secondary spermatocytes at late prometaphase (M8 stage) showing a single actin cluster associated with one of these cells. Most likely this is a type 2 aggregate that persists due to a failure in actin ring disassembly during telophase I. (i) Two metaphase II figures at the M9 stage showing a single actin aggregate. This structure is located in the same area occupied by the telophase I midbody, supporting the conclusion that it is a type 2 aggregate that originates from the actin ring. (j) A telophase II at the M11 stage with a clearly abnormal actin structure (type 3 aggregate) at the central spindle midzone. Bar, 10 μm.
quence is required in vertebrates for the translocation of coflin into the nucleus upon heat shock or treatment with 10% DMSO (Nishida et al., 1987; Iida et al., 1992). Translocation is thought to be regulated by the phosphorylation state of a serine residue immediately upstream of this motif (Ohta et al., 1989; see Morgan et al., 1993). Twinstar retains distinct homology to the nuclear localization motif, while other nonvertebrate homologues retain only weak similarities; yeast coflin is unable to localize to the nucleus (Moon et al., 1993). Based on sequence similarity, it seems possible that twinstar could translocate into the nucleus; however, it does not have a serine residue in exactly the same position relative to the signal sequence. We have no direct evidence at present to establish whether the twinstar protein can also translocate into the nucleus when Drosophila cells are stressed.

**Actin Behavior in twinstar Mutants**

Our observations provide strong evidence that actin dynamics are significantly perturbed in the absence of *tsr* activity. Staining with phalloidin, which specifically binds filamentous actin (Estes et al., 1981), shows that *tsr* testes contain large F-actin aggregates that are not seen in wild-type. Type 1 aggregates are first detected during the last stage of primary spermatocyte structures that are not seen in wild-type. Type 1 aggregates are first detected during the last stage of primary spermatocyte growth (stage S6) and then grow to reach their maximum size at the onset of the first meiotic division. We hypothesize that centrosomes serve as the foci for this abnormal accumulation of actin in mature primary spermatocytes because type 1 F-actin aggregates begin to form when nascent asters first become visible, and they remain associated with asters throughout prophase/prometaphase of meiosis I (M1 stage).

We speculate that a nucleation center for actin addition may exist near centrosomes in *tsr* mutants, and that the absence of twinstar activity may lead to uncontrolled actin accumulation at this site. Although phalloidin staining does not reveal the presence of F-actin in the vicinity of centrosomes in wild-type primary spermatocytes (data not shown), the actin-related protein Arp1 (also known as centrinactin or actin-RPV) has been found in association with centrosomes in other systems (Clark and Meyer, 1992; Lees-Miller et al., 1992). Arp1 forms a short F-actin-like filament that is part of the dynactin complex (Paschal et al., 1993; Schafer et al., 1994), which stimulates minus end-directed dynein-mediated vesicle motility along microtubules (Gill et al., 1991; Schroer and Sheetz, 1991). It is conceivable that a dynactin-like complex may normally localize to centrosomes in primary spermatocytes. Alternatively, if in *tsr* mutants the normal cytoplasmic or cortical anchors for a dynactin-like complex were disrupted, it could be pulled to the centrosome by its associated motor activity. In either case, this type of complex might provide a centrosomal focus for aberrant actin accumulation.

Unusual F-actin foci are also present in secondary spermatocytes and spermatids of *tsr* mutants (type 2 and type 3 aggregates), and almost certainly result from a failure to disassemble the actin structures found during telophase at the positions of the meiosis I and II contractile rings. Scru-tiny of a large number of *tsr* meiotic cysts clearly shows that these telophase structures are more prominent than wild-type contractile rings and exhibit protuberances ori-
spindle morphology and chromosome separation in mutant testes subsequent to the aberrant migration of asters during prophase/prometaphase of meiosis I. This argues that the meiotic spindle has considerable self-regulating properties, which may be related to the extended period of time (between 20 and 45 min) required for bivalents to achieve a stable bipolar configuration before anaphase onset in these cells (Church and Lin, 1985). This might provide sufficient time for the asters in twinstar mutants to migrate eventually to their proper position so that correct chromosome segregation can occur. Final aster positioning in the mutant is likely to be mediated, at least in part, by microtubule-kinetochore attachments that may provide positional signals to restore proper aster localization. We envision that lateral forces exerted between interdigitating microtubules emanating from the two poles also participate in centrosome separation.

Cytokinesis. Larvae carrying mutant tsr alleles clearly exhibit frequent failures of cytokinesis both in neuroblast cells and in male meiosis. At present we have no information regarding the primary cause of cytokinesis failure in neuroblasts. However, our observations on testes suggest two possible explanations for how a reduction in twinstar activity might affect meiotic cytokinesis.

The first possibility is that the cytokinesis defect arises primarily from the abnormal migration and positioning of asters. It is clear that mechanisms must exist that transmit signals from the spindle asters to the contractile apparatus, explaining how difficulties in cytokinesis could result indirectly from problems in centrosome positioning within the cell. A number of experiments indicate that the spindle asters specify the position of the cleavage furrow midway between them (reviewed by Rappaport, 1986), and some evidence suggests that the asters may be able to dictate this position as early as prophase (Sluder and Miller, 1990), when the irregularities in twinstar aster localization are manifested. We believe this possibility to be unlikely because tsr mutants correctly localize actin structures to the midzone at the same time that normal contractile rings form. Nevertheless, it remains conceivable that a putative alteration of signals emanating from the asters could affect the responsiveness of the cortical cytoplasm without affecting positioning of the contractile ring.

The more likely possibility is that cytokinesis is disrupted in tsr mutants because of abnormalities in the formation and/or disassembly of the contractile ring. Our observations clearly show that tsr mutants exhibit morphologically abnormal contractile rings that fail to disassemble during cleavage. Most current models of cytokinesis assert that the contractile ring is an overlapping array of actin filaments of opposite polarity attached to the plasma membrane. These actin filaments interact with bipolar myosin-II filaments, leading to constriction of the cell periphery (reviewed in Satterwhite and Pollard, 1992; Fishkind and Wang, 1995). One could easily imagine several scenarios by which a cofilin-like protein such as twinstar, which can modulate actin dynamics in vitro by severing and depolymerizing filaments (S. K. Maciver, personal communication), might play a role in cytokinesis. Such an activity might function in the recruitment of cortical actin filaments to the contractile ring (Cao and Wang, 1990), turnover of actin within the contractile ring (Inoue, 1990), or disassembly of the contractile ring during furrowing and cleavage (Maupin and Pollard, 1986). In any event, there is substantial precedent to suggest that the twinstar protein could function in concert with other proteins to promote proper organization of contractile filaments. The cofilin homologue actophorin, in the presence of the actin cross-linking protein α-actinin, promotes formation of actin bundles in vitro (Maciver et al., 1991). In addition, the correct assembly of the contractile myofilament lattice in the body wall muscle of C. elegans requires an activity encoded by a cofilin-like gene: in unc-60 mutants, thin filaments aggregate at the ends of the cell instead of interdigitating with thick filaments, which appear essentially normal (Waterston et al., 1980). Most recently, vertebrate cofilin has been found to localize to the contractile ring in tissue culture (Nagaoka et al., 1995).

Additional Functions of the twinstar Protein

We believe it unlikely that twinstar function is required only for cytokinesis or correct aster migrations in prophase. It is quite possible that the phenotypes we have examined represent only those events that are most susceptible to depletion of maternal twinstar protein stores. Neither the tsr1 nor the tsr2 allele appears to represent the null state of the twinstar locus: some mRNA is expressed in mutant animals and these mutations do not interfere with the open reading frame encoding the protein. Other functions of twinstar might therefore be uncovered by an analysis of phenotypes associated with either true null mutations, which can in theory be isolated by transposase-promoted imprecise excision of the tsr1 or tsr2 P elements (Bellen et al., 1989), or conditional mutations. We expect to find that twinstar protein may also be required for muscle formation, or for processes such as cellular motility or the determination of cell shape in Drosophila. In this light, it is interesting to note that when a Drosophila cDNA clone essentially identical to our twinstar cDNA is overexpressed in S. pombe, changes in cell shape are observed in association with perturbations in actin distribution (Edwards et al., 1994). Their results, in combination with the findings described in this paper, emphasize the importance to the cell of maintaining the proper stoichiometry of cofilin with respect to other cytoskeletal components.

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