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## Associate Professor Shailesh Lal Studies "Jumping Genes"

**Transposable elements** (sequences of **DNA** that can move to different positions in the **genome**, sometimes called "jumping genes") constitute a large fraction of the human genome and have been linked to a number of genetic disorders and cancer. They also play a role in transmission of antibiotic resistance in bacteria, thus creating multi-antibiotic resistant strains. Associate Professor **Shailesh Lal**, of the **Department of Biological Sciences**, studies one particular type of transposable element, a helitron, using the corn genome as his model system. In the February, 2009 issue of **Plant Science**, Lal and his coworkers published a review article describing this work: **Helitrons: Enigmatic Abductors and Mobilizers of Host Genome Sequences** (Volume 176, Pages 181-186). Coauthor Matthew Oetjens is a graduate student in the **Master of Science in Biology** program.

### SUMMARY

Transposable elements (sequences of DNA that can move to different positions in the genome, sometimes called "jumping genes") constitute a large fraction of the human genome and have been linked to a number of genetic disorders and cancer.

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