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Cancer-free elephants

 Elephants are beautiful creatures that are quickly becoming some of the most endangered animals in the world. They are gentle giants and are magnificent to see. But they aren’t just large and beautiful. They also rarely get cancer! Even though they are huge and have way more cells than an animal like a human, why don’t elephants get cancer?

 Scientists called oncologists (who study cancer) found that elephants have many copies of a gene called TP53 which has a nickname “guardian of the genome”. This is because this TP53 gene prevents tumors from forming and causing harmful cancer. Studies show that this gene evolved because it helped elephants fight cancer and live longer, and by passing on this gene, elephants have become an animal that rarely gets cancer and stays healthier. So, how can humans get more copies of this gene? This is an important research question because with so many people dying of cancer, maybe elephants can help!

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/why-do-elephants-rarely-get-cancer/2015/10/12/72a1849a-6df0-11e5-b31c-d80d62b53e28\_story.html