

Erratum

In Plusa *et al.* (*Nature Cell Biology* 4, 811–815, (2002)), the incorrect abstract was published. This has now been corrected online and is reproduced below:

The conservation of early cleavage patterns in organisms as diverse as echinoderms and mammals suggests that even in highly regulative embryos such as the mouse, division patterns might be important for development^{1–4}. Indeed, the first cleavage divides the fertilized mouse egg into two cells: one cell that contributes predominantly to the embryonic part of the blastocyst, and one that contributes to the abembryonic part^{5,6}. Here we show, by removing, transplanting or duplicating the animal or vegetal poles of the mouse egg, that a spatial cue at the animal pole orients the plane of this initial division. Embryos with duplicated animal, but not vegetal, poles show abnormalities in chromosome segregation that compromise their development. Our results show that localized factors in the mammalian egg orient the spindle and so define the initial cleavage plane. In increased dosage, however, these factors are detrimental to the correct execution of division.