

ERK1 and ERK2 are also very similar proteins, with about 70% similarity between them, which is higher in the kinase domain and lower in the flanking N- and C terminal regions. Numerous studies using anti EPK and anti phosphoEPK antibodies.

C-terminal regions. Numerous studies using anti-ERK and anti-phosphoERK antibodies revealed that the two isoforms are expressed in essentially all cells and tissues in variable relative amounts, whereby ERK2 is the predominant isoform in most cells. Usually, both proteins share similar activation kinetics, cellular localization, and a set of substrates, indicating that under most circumstances the two isoforms function in a similar fashion. However, as described for MEKs,

some differences between the two isoforms do exist under certain restricted conditions, and those differences are best exemplified by the use of ERK1 and ERK2 knockout mice.

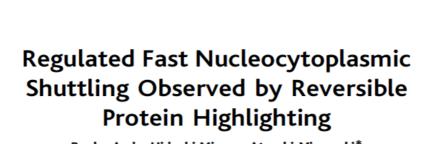
ERK1-deficient mice are viable, fertile, with normal size, but manifest a deficit in thymocyte maturation. Moreover, these mice exhibit an elevated synaptic plasticity in the striatum, which could be a result of a stimulus-dependent elevation in ERK2 phosphorylation, which was observed in neurons as well as fibroblasts of these mice.

ERK2-deficient mice die early in development, showing that ERK1 can't compensate for ERK2 in the embryo

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