

DESCRIPTION

TITLE OF INVENTION: INHIBITOR OF THE EXPRESSION OF CANCER-PROMOTING FACTORS, SCREENING METHOD FOR ACTIVE INGREDIENT THEREOF, EXPRESSION CASSETTE USEFUL IN SAID METHOD, DIAGNOSTIC DRUG, AND DIAGNOSTIC METHOD

[Technical Field]

[0001]

The present invention relates to an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor; a method for screening for an active ingredient of the inhibitor ; an expression cassette useful for the method; a diagnostic agent and a diagnosis method both for immune diseases, inflammatory diseases, painful diseases and the like; and others.

[0002]

In recent years, it has been revealed that an inflammatory cytokine produced by a cancer cell or an immune cell infiltrated into a tumor microenvironment plays an important role in the development and progression of cancer. It is known that an inflammatory cytokine, such as TNF α and IL-6, produced by a lymphocyte such as a tumor-infiltrating macrophage, a fibroblast and a T cell acts on a tumor cell, and acts in a paracrine manner through the production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) or the production of prostaglandin as the result of the increase in expression of cyclooxygenase; in this manner, the inflammatory cytokine contributes to the progression or expansion of cancer associated with the damage of DNA (Nat Rev Cancer, 2013, 13(11), 759-771.). On the other hand, it is also known that an inflammatory cytokine (e.g., IL-6 and TNF α), a chemokine (e.g., IL-8 and CXCL1) or a growth factor (e.g., HBEGF and PDGF) produced by a cancer cell acts in an autocrine

manner to activate a STAT pathway, a PI3K-Akt pathway and a NF- κ B pathway; in this manner, the inflammatory cytokine helps the survival or growth of cancer cells and contributes to the acquisition of an infiltration ability (Cancer Res, 2013, 73(11), 3470-3480.; Oncogene, 2014, 33(29), 3784-3793.; and Cancer Res, 2007, 67(2), 585-592.). It is known that IL-6 contributes to the growth or metastasis of cancer cells through the regulation of a migratory factor such as S100A8/9, an apoptosis-resistant gene such as Bcl2 and Myc and a Jagged-1 that is a Notch ligand in breast cancer, lung cancer and liver cancer (Cancer Cell, 2008, 13(1), 7-9., J Clin Invest, 2007, 117(12), 3988-4002., J Clin Invest, 2007, 117(12), 3846-3856., Cell, 2013, 155(2), 384-396., Neoplasia, 2013, 15(7), 848-862., Oncogene, 2006, 25(31), 4300-4309., and Genes Dev, 2015, 29(15), 1631-1648.).

[0003]

RNA-binding motif, single-stranded-interacting protein 2 (RBMS2) is a protein that is believed to have two RNA-binding domains on the N-terminal side. However, it is not reported yet that the functions of the protein are actually analyzed, and the functions of the protein are not elucidated yet.

[0004]

The present invention addresses the problem of: discovering a novel factor that can affect the expression amount/level of a cancer promoting factor; providing an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor and a tool for developing the inhibitor on the basis of the discovering the factor; and providing a diagnostic agent and a diagnosis method both for immune diseases, inflammatory diseases, painful diseases and other diseases.

[Means for Solving the Problems]

[0005]

mRNA molecules encoding many inflammatory cytokines including IL-6 are very unstable, and are degraded rapidly after transcription. On the other hand, it is believed that the stabilization of the mRNA at a post-transcriptional level induces the increase in the expression amount/level of the mRNA and the prolongation of an inflammation and, as a result, leads to the chronicity of the inflammation and finally the development of cancer. In these situations, it is attempted to identify a novel factor that can regulate IL-6 at a post-transcriptional level.

[0006]

The present inventors have made extensive and intensive studies. As a result, it is found that RBMS is involved in the post-transcriptional regulation of mRNA molecules of various cancer promoting factors such as IL-6. It is also found that RBMS is involved in the growth of cells, the migration of cells, the infiltration of cells and the metastasis of cells. On the basis of these findings, it is also found that a cancer promoting factor can be inhibited and cancer can be prevented or treated by inhibiting the expression or function of RBMS, and that cancer can be diagnosed by employing the expression amount/level of RBMS as an index. The studies are further pursued on the basis of these findings. As a result, the present invention has been accomplished.

[0007]

That is, the present invention includes the following aspects.

[0008]

1. A reagent for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor, comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can

be regulated by the region, a vector carrying the expression cassette and a cell harboring the vector.

[0009]

2. The screening reagent according to item 1, wherein the expression cassette is at least one expression cassette selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, an expression cassette containing a RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and an expression cassette containing a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region.

[0010]

3. A method for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor by employing at least one item selected from the group consisting of items (i) to (iii) as an index in the presence of a test substance:

- (i) the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS gene expression regulation region;
 - (ii) the binding amount/level of RBMS to RNA containing an AU-rich element;
- and
- (iii) the amount/level of mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof or the amount/level of a protein derived from the mRNA in a RBMS-overexpressing cell.

[0011]

4. The screening method according to item 3, wherein
the expression amount/level of a gene in the index (i) is at least one item selected from the group consisting of the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a

RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region, and

the RBMS in each of the indices (ii) and (iii) is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

[0012]

5. The screening method according to item 3 or 4, wherein, when the value of the index in the presence of a test substance is smaller than the value of the index in the absence of the test substance, the test substance is selected as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor.

[0013]

6. The screening method according to any one of items 3 to 5, wherein the AU-rich element is an AU-rich element derived from mRNA for at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[0014]

7. The screening method according to any one of items 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a1) to (c1):

(a1) bringing an expression system which contains an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region into contact with a test substance;

(b1) measuring, as an expression amount/level of interest, the expression amount/level of the gene in the expression system that has been contacted with the test

substance and then comparing the expression amount/level of interest with a control expression amount/level that is the expression amount/level of the gene in an expression system that has not been contacted with the test substance; and

(c1) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the expression amount/level of interest is smaller than the control expression amount/level.

[0015]

8. The screening method according to item 7, wherein the expression cassette is at least one expression cassette selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, an expression cassette containing a RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and an expression cassette containing a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region.

[0016]

9. The screening method according to item 7 or 8, wherein the expression system is a cell.

[0017]

10. The screening method according to any one of items 7 to 9, wherein the gene is a reporter gene.

[0018]

11. The screening method according to any one of items 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a2) to (c2):

(a2) bringing RNA containing an AU-rich element into contact with RBMS in the presence of a test substance;

(b2) measuring the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the presence of the test substance as a binding

amount/level of interest, and then comparing the binding amount/level of interest with a control binding amount/level that is the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the absence of the test substance; and

(c2) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the binding amount/level of interest is smaller than the control binding amount/level.

[0019]

12. The screening method according to item 11, wherein the RBMS is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

[0020]

13. The screening method according to any one of items 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a3) to (c3):

(a3) bringing a cell which contains mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof and in which RBMS is overexpressed into contact with a test substance;

(b3) measuring the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in the cell that has been contacted with the test substance as an amount/level of interest, and then comparing the amount/level of interest with a control amount/level that is the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in a cell that is not contacted with the test substance; and

(c3) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the amount/level of interest is smaller than the control amount/level.

[0021]

14. The screening method according to item 13, wherein the RBMS is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

[0022]

15. The screening method according to item 13 or 14, wherein the mRNA contains an ORF of a reporter protein.

[0023]

16. An inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor, comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS expression inhibitor and a RBMS function inhibitor.

[0024]

17. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to item 16, wherein the RBMS expression inhibitor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 expression inhibitor, a RBMS2 expression inhibitor and a RBMS3 expression inhibitor; and

the RBMS function inhibitor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 function inhibitor, a RBMS2 function inhibitor and a RBMS3 function inhibitor.

[0025]

18. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to item 16 or 17, wherein the RBMS expression inhibitor contains at least one RBMS expression inhibitor selected from the group consisting of RBMS-specific siRNA, RBMS-specific miRNA, a RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid, expression vectors for these components and IL-10.

[0026]

19. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to any one of items 16 to 18, wherein the cancer promoting factor of which the expression is to be inhibited is at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6,

ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[0027]

20. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to any one of items 16 to 19, wherein the inhibitor is used as a preventing or treating agent for cancer.

[0028]

21. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to item 20, wherein the cancer to be prevented or treated is at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of (X) to (Z):

(X) at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer;

(Y) the cancer is cancer of a type of RAS gene mutation; and

(Z) the cancer is highly malignant cancer.

[0029]

22. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to item 21, wherein the RAS gene mutation is a KRAS gene mutation.

[0030]

23. A diagnostic agent for cancer, comprising a RBMS gene expression product detecting agent.

[0031]

24. The diagnostic agent for cancer according to item 23, wherein the RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 gene expression product detecting agent, a RBMS2 gene

expression product detecting agent and a RBMS3 gene expression product detecting agent.

[0032]

25. The diagnostic agent according to item 23 or 24, wherein a cancer promoting factor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[0033]

26. The diagnostic agent for cancer according to any one of items 23 to 25, wherein the cancer to be diagnosed is at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of (X) to (Z):

(X) at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer;

(Y) the cancer is cancer of a type of RAS gene mutation; and

(Z) the cancer is highly malignant cancer.

[0034]

27. The diagnostic agent according to item 26, wherein the RAS gene mutation is a KRAS gene mutation.

[0035]

28. A method for detecting cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a1) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject; and

(b1) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a1) with a control expression amount/level of the RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject which does not suffer from cancer, wherein

(c1) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is larger than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has the cancer.

[0036]

29. A method for determining the degree of progression of cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a2) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject suffering from the cancer; and

(b2) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a2) with a control expression amount/level of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject suffering from the cancer, wherein

(c2) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is larger than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has a higher degree of progression of the cancer than that of the control subject.

[0037]

30. The method according to item 28 or 29, wherein the RBMS gene expression product is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 gene expression product, a RBMS2 gene expression product and a RBMS3 gene expression product.

[0038]

31. The method according to any one of items 28 to 30, wherein the cancer can be developed or worsened by at least one component selected from the group consisting of

CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[Advantages of the Invention]

[0039]

According to the present invention, it becomes possible to provide a novel inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor, a novel preventing or treating agent for an immune disease, an inflammatory disease, a painful disease or the like, and a tool for developing the inhibitor or the preventing or treating agent (e.g., a method for screening for an active ingredient, an expression cassette useful for the method), all of which utilize a novel target factor that affects the expression amount/level of a cancer promoting factor. According to the present invention, it also becomes possible to provide a diagnostic agent and a diagnosis method for an immune disease, an inflammatory disease, a painful disease or the like, which rely on a novel mechanism.

[Brief Description of Drawings]

[0040]

Fig. 1A illustrates a schema of screening of Example 1A.

Fig. 1B illustrates the results of Example 1B. In the left side of the graph, an upper schematic diagram illustrates a partial structure of a control reporter vector (without an IL-6 3'UTR) used, and a lower schematic diagram illustrates a partial structure of a reporter vector (with an IL-6 3'UTR) used. A white column represents a case where an empty vector (pcDNA3.1) is introduced, and a black column represents a case where a RBMS2 expression vector (pcDNA3.1 FLAG-RBMS2) is introduced. The transverse axis represents a relative value of a measured luciferase activity.

Fig. 3A illustrates the results of Example 5A. The vertical axis represents a luciferase activity that reflects the number of surviving cells. In the transverse axes, “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA is introduced, and “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 3B illustrates the results of Example 5B. The vertical axis represents an absorbance that reflects the number of cells, and the transverse axis represents a time lapsed after the transfection of siRNA. “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA is introduced, and “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 3C illustrates the results of Example 5C. In the upper part in the photograph, “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA is introduced, “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is transfected, and each of numerical values represents a time lapsed after the start of stimulation with IL-1 β . On the left side in the photograph, substances to be detected by western blotting are shown.

Fig. 4 illustrates the results of Example 6. “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA is introduced, and “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 5 illustrates the results of Example 7. “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA is introduced, and “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 6 illustrates the results of Example 8A. The transverse axis represents a value relative to a luciferase activity (e.g., (an activity obtained when a RBMS2 expression vector is introduced)/(an activity obtained when an empty vector is introduced)). In the vertical axis, 3'UTR-derived genes each arranged downstream from a luciferase gene in a reporter vector are shown. In the vertical axis, “Empty”

represents a case where a 3'UTR derived from other gene is not arranged downstream from the luciferase gene in the reporter vector.

Fig. 7 illustrates the results of Example 8B. The vertical axis represents a relative value of an amount/level of luciferase mRNA in an immunoprecipitation product, wherein the amount/level of luciferase mRNA in a cell lysate before immunoprecipitation is 100%. In the transverse axis, “AUUUA” represents a case where a reporter vector in which a F3 gene wild-type 3'UTR is linked to the downstream of luciferase gene (Examples 8A) is introduced, and “AGGGA” represents a case where a reporter vector in which a F3 gene mutant 3'UTR (a mutant of an AU-rich element) is linked to the downstream of luciferase gene is introduced. A black column represents a case where immunoprecipitation is performed with an anti-FLAG antibody, and a white column represents a case where immunoprecipitation is performed by a non-specific IgG.

Fig. 8 illustrates the results of Example 9. Amino acid residues are represented by single letter codes. Each of the numerical values above and on the right side of the amino acid sequence represents an amino acid number counted from the N-terminal side.

Fig. 9 illustrates the results of Example 10. The vertical axis represents a relative value of an expression amount/level of RBMS gene relative to an expression amount/level of HPRT gene. In the transverse axis, the names of cell strains are shown.

Fig. 10 illustrates the results of Example 11. The vertical axis represents a luciferase activity. In the vertical axis, 3'UTR-derived genes each arranged downstream from a luciferase gene in a reporter vector are shown.

Fig. 11 illustrates the results of Example 12. The vertical axis represents an absorbance that reflects the number of cells, and the transverse axis represents a time lapsed after the transfection of siRNA. “siNega” represents a case where control siRNA

is introduced, “siRBMS1” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS1 is introduced, and “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 12 illustrates the results of Example 13.

Fig. 13 illustrates the results of Example 14. The vertical axis represents a relative value of an expression amount/level of RBMS2 mRNA relative to an expression amount/level of HPRT mRNA. The transverse axis represents a time lapsed after the addition of IL-10 protein or TGF β protein. A white column represents a case where IL-10 protein is added, and a black column represents a case where TGF β protein is added.

Fig. 14 illustrates the schematic illustration of PAR-CLIP in Example 15.

Fig. 15 illustrates the results of Example 15. Each bar represents a gene shown in above (from the left side, 5'→3'), each black box in a bar represents an exon. In a black box, a thin part represents an UTR (a non-code region) and a thick part represents a CDS (a code region). A dot below a bar represents a position of an AU-rich element. A graph above a bar is a graph in which the vertical axis represents the binding amount/level of RBMS2 (= the number of sequence reads).

Fig. 16A illustrates the results of Example 16 (data of expression of RBMS2). The vertical axis represents an expression amount/level, and the transverse axis represents cell species.

Fig. 16B illustrates the results of Example 16 (data of expression of RBMS1). The vertical axis represents an expression amount/level, and the transverse axis represents cell species.

Fig. 17A illustrates the results of Example 17 (quantitative PCR 1). The vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of RBMS2 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT, and the transverse axis represents cell species.

Fig. 17B illustrates the results of Example 17 (western blotting). In the upper part in the photograph, cell species are shown. “siRBMS2” represents a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced.

Fig. 17C illustrates the results of Example 17 (quantitative PCR 2). A photograph in the upper part is an observation image of MCF-7 cells (Control) and cells (KRAS^{G13D}) produced by introducing a KRAS G13D mutant into the cells. A graph in the lower part shows the expression amount/level of RBMS2 or IL-6 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. In the transverse axis of each of the graphs, cell species used (MCF-7 cells (Control), and cells produced by introducing a KRAS G13D mutant into the cells are shown.

Fig. 17D illustrates the results of Example 17 (quantitative PCR 3). In each of graphs, the vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of a gene shown in the upper part of the graph which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. In the transverse axes, “siNeg” represents a case where negative control siRNA is introduced, and “siKRAS” represents a case where siRNA for KRAS is introduced.

Fig. 17E illustrates the mechanism of regulating the expression of RBMS2 and the mechanism of regulating the expression of a cancer promoting factor, which is suggested from the results of Example 17.

Fig. 18 illustrates the results of Example 18. In each of graphs, the vertical axis represents a survival rate, and the transverse axis represents a time (unit: year).

Fig. 19 illustrates the results of Example 19. In each of graphs, the vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of RBMS2 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT, and the transverse axis represents cell species.

Fig. 20A represents the results of Example 20 (RBMS2). The vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of RBMS2 which is corrected by the expression

amount/level of HPRT. In the transverse axis, “empty” represents a case where an empty vector is introduced, and “KRAS” represents a case where an expression vector for wild-type KRAS (WT) or each of various KRAS mutants (G12D, G12S, G12V and G13D) is introduced. A white column represents a case where culture is carried out in a culture medium containing 100 ng/ml of doxycycline, and a black column represents a case where culture is carried out in a culture medium containing 1000 ng/ml of doxycycline.

Fig. 20B represents the results of Example 20 (RBMS1). The vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of RBMS1 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 20A.

Fig. 20C illustrates the results of Example 20 (IL-6). The vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of IL-6 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 20A.

Fig. 20D illustrates the results of Example 20 (IL-8). The vertical axis represents the expression amount/level of IL-8 which is corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 20A.

Fig. 21A illustrates the results of Example 21 (a case where MCF-7 cells and MDA-MB-231 cells are used). The vertical axis represents the amount/level of remaining RNA wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without actinomycin D is defined as 100%, and the transverse axis represents the time lapsed after the addition of actinomycin D.

Fig. 21B illustrates the results of Example 21 (a case where HepG2 cells, LoVo cells and HPAF-II cells are used). Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 21A.

Fig. 21C illustrates the results of Example 21 (a case where siRNA for KRAS is introduced). Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 21A.

Fig. 21D illustrates the results of Example 21 (a case where siRNA for RBMS2 is introduced). Other statements are the same as those mentioned with respect to Fig. 21A.

Fig. 22 illustrates the results of Example 22. Beside the graph, schematic illustrations of promoters used are shown. Each of boxes represents an exon of RBMS2 (exon-1 and exon-2 from the left). The transverse axis in the graph represents a corrected value of a luciferase activity.

[Mode for Carrying Out the Invention]]

[0041]

1. Definitions

The wordings “contain” and “comprise” as used herein include all of the concepts of “contain”, “comprise”, “substantially consisting of” and “consisting only of”.

[0042]

The amino acid sequence “identity” refers to the degree of amino acid sequence agreement between at least two amino acid sequences that can be compared with each other. Therefore, the identity or similarity of two amino acid sequences becomes higher with the increase in the degree of amino acid sequence agreement between the amino acid sequences. The level of amino acid sequence identity can be determined using

FASTA as a sequence analysis tool and employing a default parameter. Alternatively, the level of amino acid sequence identity can also be determined using an algorithm BLAST established by Karlin and Altschul (Karlin S, Altschul SF.” Methods for assessing the statistical significance of molecular sequence features by using general scoringschemes” Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. 87:2264-2268 (1990), Karlin S, Altschul SF.” Applications and statistics for multiple high-scoring segments in molecular sequences.” Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. 90:5873-7 (1993)). A program called “BLASTX” which relies on the algorithm BLAST has been developed. Specific techniques for these analysis methods are known, and see a web site of National Center of Biotechnology Information (NCBI) (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>). The nucleotide sequence “identity” can also be defined accordingly as mentioned above.

[0043]

The term “conservative substitution” as used herein refers to the matter that an amino acid residue is substituted by an amino acid residue having a similar side chain. For example, the substitution between amino acid residues each having a basic side chain, e.g., lysine, arginine, histidine, is included within the scope of the conservative substitution. In addition, the substitution between amino acid residues each having an acidic side chain, e.g., aspartic acid, glutamic acid, the substitution between amino acid residues each having an uncharged polar side chain, e.g., glycine, asparagine, glutamine, serine, threonine, tyrosine and cysteine, the substitution between amino acid residues each having a non-polar side chain, e.g., alanine, valine, leucine, isoleucine, proline, phenylalanine, methionine and tryptophan, the substitution between amino acid residues each having a β -branched side chain, e.g., threonine, valine and isoleucine, and the substitution between amino acid residues each having an aromatic side chain, e.g.,

tyrosine, phenylalanine, tryptophan and histidine, are included within the scope of the conservative substitution.

[0044]

The term “RBMS” as used herein includes a RBMS family, specifically at least one member selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3. Among these members, RBMS1 and RBMS2 are preferred, and RBMS2 is more preferred. RBMS may comprise a single member, or may comprise a combination of two or more members. An example of the preferred combination is a combination of RBMS2 and RBMS1 and/or RBMS3.

[0045]

In the description, the expression “RBMS”, “RBMS1”, “RBMS2” or “RBMS3” means a protein.

[0046]

In the description, each of “a nucleotide”, “an oligonucleotide” and “a polynucleotide” has the same meaning as “a nucleic acid”, and both of DNA and RNA are included. Each of these substances may be in a double-stranded form or a single-stranded form. The term a “nucleotide” (or an “oligonucleotide” or a “polynucleotide”) having a given sequence also includes a “nucleotide” (or an “oligonucleotide” or a “polynucleotide”) having a sequence complementary to the sequence therefor comprehensively, unless otherwise stated. In addition, in the case where the “nucleotide” (or an “oligonucleotide” or a “polynucleotide”) is RNA, the nucleotide symbol “T” shown in a sequence for the nucleotide is to be read “U”.

[0047]

The term “cancer” as used herein includes various types of cancer. Examples of the cancer include pancreatic cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, esophagus cancer, stomach cancer, colorectal cancer, liver cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer, prostate cancer, skin cancer, breast cancer and cervical cancer.

[0048]

The cancer is preferably at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of (X) to (Z):

(X) at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer;

(Y) the cancer is cancer of a type of RAS gene mutation; and

(Z) the cancer is highly malignant cancer.

[0049]

Among pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer, those cancer which is of a type of RAS gene mutation, and highly malignant cancer are preferred.

[0050]

The term “RAS” includes various types of RAS, and the type of RAS is not particularly limited as long as the RAS is RAS that can cause cancer when mutated and/or RAS that can progress cancer when mutated. Examples of the type of RAS include KRAS, NRAS and HRAS, and KRAS is preferred.

[0051]

The RAS gene mutation is not particularly limited, as long as the mutation is a mutation that can cause cancer and/or a mutation that can progress cancer. In the case of human KRAS, examples of the mutation include a mutation of an amino acid residue located at 12th position from the N-terminal (G) and a mutation of an amino acid

residue located at 13th position from the N-terminal (G), and more specific examples include G12S, G12C, G12R, G12D, G12V, G12A, G13S, G13C, G13R, G13D, G13V and G13A. In the case of RAS other than human KRAS, a mutation corresponding to each of the above-mentioned mutations in human KRAS can be identified easily by comparing the amino acid sequences, domain arrangements and the like.

[0052]

The highly malignant cancer (including a cancer stem cell) is not particularly limited, as long as the cancer has a high growing ability, a high infiltration ability, a high metastasis ability, a high undifferentiation degree and the like. The degree of malignancy can be determined using, as an index, a malignancy degree marker (including a cancer stem cell marker). For example, when the cancer has a RAS gene mutation, it is determined that the cancer is highly malignant cancer. In addition, in the case of acute myeloid leukemia, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD34^+CD38^-$ is detected; in the case of breast cancer, the cancer is determined as highly malignant when $CD44^+CD24^{-/low}$ is detected; in the case of brain tumor, the tumor is detected as highly malignant cancer when $CD133^+$ is detected; in the case of prostate cancer, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD133^+$ or $Sca-1^+$ is detected; in the case of colorectal cancer, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD133^+$ is detected; in the case of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD44^+$ is detected; in the case of pancreatic cancer, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD133^+CXCR4^+$ is detected; and in the case of ovarian cancer, the cancer is determined as highly malignant cancer when $CD44^+CD24^+ESA$ (epithelial specific antigen) $^+$ is detected. In addition, in the case of breast cancer, an estrogen receptor-negative property, a progesterone receptor-negative property, a HER2-negative property

and the like can be employed as an index for high malignancy. In addition to the above-mentioned indices, various known markers associated with a growing ability, an inflation ability, a metastasis ability and the like can also be employed as the indices for high malignancy. The malignancy degree may be determined employing a single marker or a combination of two or more markers.

[0053]

2. Screening reagent

The present invention relates to a reagent for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor (wherein the reagent is also referred to as a “screening reagent of the present invention”, hereinafter), which comprises at least one component selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region (wherein the expression cassette is also referred to as an “expression cassette of the present invention, hereinafter), a vector carrying the expression cassette and a cell harboring the vector. Hereinbelow, the screening reagent will be described.

[0054]

In the present application, the term an “expression cassette” refers to a polynucleotide having such a function that a gene contained in the expression cassette can be expressed in a cell (e.g., a eukaryotic cell, preferably an animal cell, more preferably a mammalian cell).

[0055]

In the present application, the “RBMS gene expression regulation region” is not particularly limited, as long as the region is a DNA region capable of regulating the expression of endogenous RBMS gene in a cell or a DNA region having the same

regulation ability as that of the aforementioned DNA region. An example of the region is a promoter that contains a transcription initiation site for RBMS gene, a sequence located upstream (5' side) from the transcription initiation site, and optionally a sequence located downstream (3' side) from the transcription initiation site. A specific example of the promoter is a DNA region lying between -10000 to +2000, preferably -5000 to +1000, more preferably -2000 to +500, further preferably -1000 to +200, still further preferably -500 to +100, especially preferably -200 to +50, wherein a nucleotide corresponding to the transcription initiation site for RBMS gene is expressed as "+1", a nucleotide located downstream (3' side) from the aforementioned nucleotide is expressed by a positive value, and a nucleotide located upstream from the aforementioned nucleotide is expressed by 0 or a negative value. In RBMS2, a region that is important for a transcriptional activity is contained between about 4 kbp and 2.5 kbp upstream of exon-2 and between exon-1 and exon-2. Therefore, a promoter containing at least one of the two regions is preferred. The promoter may have a mutation, as long as the promoter has the same level of expression regulation ability as that of a promoter capable of regulating the expression of endogenous RBMS gene in a cell. In this case, the nucleotide sequence for the promoter having a mutation has, for example, a 70% or more, preferably 80% or more, more preferably 90% or more, further preferably 95% or more, still further preferably 97% or more, especially preferably 99% or more identity to a nucleotide sequence for a promoter capable of regulating the expression of endogenous RBMS gene in a cell. It is desirable that the position of the mutation is a position other than the position of a known expression regulation element (e.g., a basic transcription factor binding region, any one of various activator binding regions). The consensus sequence for the expression regulation element is already known, and can be searched easily on various data base.

[0056]

In the present application, “RBMS gene” is not particularly limited, and examples of the gene include those from animals including various mammals such as human, monkey, mouse, rat, dog, cat, rabbit, pig, horse, cow, sheep, goat and deer.

[0057]

RBMS genes derived from various animals are known. RBMS mRNA and RBMS protein which are expression products of the RBMS genes can be exemplified as follows.

[0058]

A specific example of human RBMS2 mRNA such as mRNA consisting of the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_002898.3); murine RBMS2 mRNA such as mRNA consisting of the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 2 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_019711.2); human RBMS2 protein such as a protein consisting of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_002889.1); and murine RBMS2 protein such as a protein consisting of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 4 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_062685.2). The RBMS2 protein includes, within the scope thereof, a type in which the N-terminal is deleted. Specific examples of the RBMS2 protein of this type include a mouse-derived protein, which is consisting of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 5 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_001034169.1) (whose mRNA is consisting of the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 6 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_001039080.1)).

[0059]

(RBMS1)

A specific example of human RBMS1 mRNA is mRNA comprising the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID No: 7 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_016836.3), and a specific example of murine RBMS1 mRNA is mRNA comprising the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 8 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_001141932.1). An example of human RBMS1 protein is a protein comprising the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 9 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_058520.1), and an example of murine RBMS1 protein is a protein comprising the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 10 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_001135404.1). The RBMS1 protein includes, within the scope thereof, a type in which the N-terminal is deleted.

[0060]

(RBMS3)

A specific example of human RBMS3 mRNA is mRNA comprising the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID No: 11 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_001003793.2), and a specific example of murine RBMS3 mRNA is mRNA comprising the nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 12 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NM_001172121.1). An example of human RBMS3 protein is a protein comprising the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 13 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_001003793.1), and an example of murine RBMS3 protein is a protein comprising the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 14 (NCBI Reference Sequence: NP_001165592.1). The RBMS3 protein includes, within the scope thereof, a type in which the N-terminal is deleted.

[0061]

RBMS protein, which is an expression product of RBMS gene, may have an amino acid mutation such as substitution, deletion, addition and insertion, as long as the

RBMS protein can have an activity to promote the expression of mRNA having a 3'UTR derived from cancer promoting factor mRNA (e.g., CSF2 mRNA, IL-6 mRNA, ADAM10 mRNA, ADM mRNA, CTGF mRNA, HBEGF mRNA, HILPDA mRNA, IL-24 mRNA, THBS1 mRNA, MYC mRNA, TGFB2 mRNA, ADAM10 mRNA, ITGA6 mRNA, F3 mRNA, PTP4A1 mRNA, HBEGF mRNA, HSPA5 mRNA, THBS1 mRNA, PLAUI mRNA, CYR61 mRNA, ITGA6 mRNA, EDIL3 mRNA, CSF1 mRNA, ITGB1 mRNA and MP1 mRNA) or a protein translated from the mRNA (wherein the activity is also referred to as an "cancer promoting factor expression promoting activity", hereinafter). From the viewpoint that the cancer promoting factor expression promoting activity is less likely to be deteriorated, the type of the mutation is preferably substitution, more preferably conservative substitution.

[0062]

RBMS mRNA, which is a transcription product of RBMS gene, may have a nucleotide mutation, such as substitution, deletion, addition and insertion, as long as a protein translated from the mRNA can have an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity. The type of the mutation is preferably a mutation by which an amino acid substitution does not occur in a protein translated from the mRNA or a mutation by which a conservative substitution of an amino acid residue can occur.

[0063]

The presence or absence of an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity can be determined by or in accordance with a known method. For example, this presence or absence can be determined by or in accordance with the methods described in the section "Examples". A specific example is as follows: in Example 1B, when an expression vector for a test protein is used as the expression vector, it is determined that the test protein has an inflammation promoting factor

expression promoting activity when the luciferase activity is higher than that achieved when an empty vector is used as the expression vector.

[0064]

A preferred specific example of RBMS protein which is an expression product of RBMS gene is at least one protein selected from the group consisting of a protein mentioned in (a) and a protein mentioned in (b):

(a) a protein which is consisting of an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 2, 5 or 6; and

(b) a protein which has 85% or more identity to an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 2, 5 or 6 and has an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity.

[0065]

In (b), the degree of identity is more preferably 90% or more, further preferably 95% or more, still further preferably 98% or more.

[0066]

An example of the protein mentioned in (b) is:

(b') a protein which is consisting of an amino acid sequence having the substitution, deletion, addition or insertion of one or several amino acid residues in an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 2, 5 or 6 and has an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity.

[0067]

In (b'), the wording "several amino acid residues" refers to, for example, 2 to 30 amino acid residues, preferably 2 to 10 amino acid residues, more preferably 2 to 5 amino acid residues, still further preferably 2 or 3 amino acid residues.

[0068]

A preferred specific example of RBMS mRNA which is a transcription product of RBMS gene is at least one component selected from the group consisting of mRNA mentioned in (c) and mRNA mentioned in (d):

(c) mRNA consisting of a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3, 4 or 7; and

(d) mRNA which has 85% or more identity to a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3, 4 or 7 and encodes a protein having an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity.

[0069]

In (d), the degree of identity is more preferably 90% or more, further preferably 95% or more, still further preferably 98% or more.

[0070]

An example of the mRNA mentioned in (d) is:

(d') mRNA encoding a protein which is consisting of a nucleotide sequence having the substitution, deletion, addition or insertion of one or several nucleotides in a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3, 4 or 7 and has an inflammation promoting factor expression promoting activity.

[0071]

In (d'), the wording "several nucleotides" refers to, for example, 2 to 500 nucleotides, preferably 2 to 100 nucleotides, more preferably 2 to 50 nucleotides, still further preferably 2 to 10 nucleotides.

[0072]

In the present application, the term "gene" which is arranged so that the expression of the gene can be regulated by a RBMS gene expression regulation region is not particularly limited, as long as an expression product of the gene can be detected.

In this regard, the term “gene” has a concept that a sequence encoding a protein that is an expression product of the gene is included, other sequence in the gene (e.g., an intron sequence) may be included, but a promoter is not contained. Examples of the gene include a reporter gene, a drug-resistant gene, an enzyme gene, a structural gene, a transport gene, a storage gene, a contractile gene, a defense gene, a regulatory gene, and modified genes thereof. Examples of the modified gene include a gene produced by mutating a nucleotide so that an amino acid mutation, e.g., substitution, deletion, addition and insertion, can occur in a part of a protein that is an expression product of the above-mentioned gene; and a gene which can express a protein that is a fusion of expression products of some of the above-mentioned genes. Among these genes, a reporter gene, a drug-resistant gene or the like is preferred, and a reporter gene is more preferred.

[0073]

In the present application, the “reporter gene” is not particularly limited, as long as the gene is, for example, a gene encoding a light-emitting (color-developing) protein capable of reacting with a specific substrate to emit light (develop a color) or a fluorescent protein capable of emitting fluorescence by the action of excited light. Examples of the light-emitting (color-developing) protein include luciferase, β -galactosidase, chloramphenicol acetyltransferase and β -glucuronidase. Examples of the fluorescent protein include GFP, Azami-Green, ZsGreen, GFP2, HyPer, Sirius, BFP, CFP, Turquoise, Cyan, TFP1, YFP, Venus, ZsYellow, Banana, KusabiraOrange, RFP, DsRed, AsRed, Strawberry, Jred, KillerRed, Cherry, HcRed and mPlum.

[0074]

In the present application, the “drug-resistant gene” is not particularly limited, as long as the gene is a gene capable of imparting resistance to a drug, e.g., an

antibacterial drug, to a cell in which the gene is expressed. Specific examples of the drug-resistant gene include a chloramphenicol-resistant gene, a tetracycline-resistant gene, a neomycin-resistant gene, an erythromycin-resistant gene, a spectinomycin-resistant gene, a kanamycin-resistant gene, a hygromycin-resistant gene and a puromycin-resistant gene.

[0075]

With respect to the above-mentioned “gene”, the wording “(being) arranged so that the expression of the gene can be regulated” means that the gene is arranged so that a protein encoded by the gene can be expressed. A specific example of the arrangement is an aspect in which the gene expression regulating region and the gene are arranged in this order as observed from the 5’-side.

[0076]

If necessary, the expression cassette of the present invention may contain other element (e.g., a multi-cloning site (MCS)). For example, in the case where a RBMS gene expression regulation region and the above-mentioned “gene” are arranged in this order as observed from the 5’-side, an aspect can be mentioned in which a MCS is arranged on the 5’-side of the RBMS gene expression regulation region (preferably adjacent to the region), or between the RBMS gene expression regulation region and the above-mentioned “gene” (preferably adjacent to one or both of the region and the gene), or on the 3’-side of the above-mentioned “gene” (preferably adjacent to the gene). The MCS is not particularly limited, as long as multiple (e.g., 2 to 50, preferably 2 to 20, more preferably 2 to 10) restriction enzyme sites are contained.

[0077]

In the present invention, a single of the expression cassette may be used, or a combination of two or more of the expression cassettes may be used.

[0078]

The expression cassette of the present invention may constitute a vector by itself or in conjunction with other sequence. The vector (also referred to as a “vector of the present invention”, hereinafter) is also included within the scope of the present invention. The “other sequence” is not particularly limited, and any one of various known sequences that can be contained in an expression vector can be used. Examples of the sequence include a replication origin and a drug-resistant gene. With respect to the type of the drug-resistant gene, the above-mentioned types can be mentioned. The type of the vector is not particularly limited, and examples of the vector include a plasmid vector such as an animal cell expressing plasmid; and a virus vector such as a retrovirus, a lentivirus, an adenovirus, an adeno-associated virus, a herpesvirus and a Sendai virus.

[0079]

The vector according to the present invention may be contained in a cell. The cell (also referred to as “a cell of the present invention”, hereinafter) is also included within the scope of the present invention. In the cell of the present invention, the vector of the present invention may be present outside of the genome or may be present in such a form that the vector is integrated in the genome. The organism species from which the cell is derived is not particularly limited, and examples of the species include various mammals such as human, monkey, mouse, rat, dog, cat, rabbit, pig, horse, cow, sheep, goat and deer. The type of the cell is not particularly limited, and cells derived from various tissues or having various properties can be mentioned, such as a blood cell, a hematopoietic stem cell/ progenitor cell, a gamete (a sperm, an ovum), a fibroblast, an epithelial cell, a vascular endothelial cell, a nerve cell, a liver cell, a keratin generating

cell, a muscle cell, an epidermal cell, an endocrine cell, an ES cell, an iPS cell, a tissue stem cell and a cancer cell.

[0080]

From this viewpoint, in the present invention, at least one component selected from the group consisting of the expression cassette of the present invention, the vector of the present invention and the cell of the present invention can be used as a reagent for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor.

[0081]

The screening reagent of the present invention is not particularly limited, as long as at least one component selected from the group consisting of the expression cassette of the present invention, the vector of the present invention and the cell of the present invention is contained. In addition, the screening reagent may also contain, for example, a component necessary for the detection of an expression product from the expression cassette of the present invention. Specific examples of the component include a hybridization reagent, a label for a probe, a detecting agent for a labeled material, a buffer solution and a tool. The reagent of the present invention may be in the form of a screening kit including these components.

[0082]

3. A screening method

The present invention relates to a method for screening for a substance capable of inhibiting the expression or function of RBMS by employing at least one item selected from the group consisting of items (i) to (iii) as an index in the presence of a test substance:

- (i) the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS gene expression regulation region;
 - (ii) the binding amount/level of RBMS to RNA containing an AU-rich element;
- and
- (iii) the amount/level of mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof or the amount/level of a protein derived from the mRNA in a RBMS-overexpressing cell. Hereinbelow, the expression cassette will be described (wherein the reagent is also referred to as a "screening method of the present invention", hereinafter).

[0083]

As the "test substance (i.e., substance to be tested)" to be used in the present application, any one of wide varieties of compounds can be used, regardless of the fact that the compound is a naturally occurring compound or an artificially produced compound. Alternatively, a purified compound, a composition prepared by mixing many types of compounds together, or an extract of an animal or plant origin may also be used. The compound includes a low-molecular-weight compound as well as a high-molecular-weight compound such as a protein, a nucleic acid and a polysaccharide.

[0084]

More specifically, according to the screening method of the present invention, when the value of the index in the presence of a test substance is smaller than the value of the index in the absence of the test substance, the test substance is selected as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor or a candidate substance for the active ingredient.

[0085]

Herein below, specific screening methods for the aspects which utilize the indices (i) to (iii), respectively, will be described.

[0086]

3-1. Screening method utilizing index (i)

The screening method utilizing index (i) includes steps (a1) to (c1):

(a1) bringing an expression system which contains an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region into contact with a test substance;

(b1) measuring, as an expression amount/level of interest, the expression amount/level of the gene in the expression system that has been contacted with the test substance, and then comparing the expression amount/level of interest with a control expression amount/level that is the expression amount/level of the gene in an expression system that has not been contacted with the test substance; and

(c1) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the expression amount/level of interest is smaller than the control expression amount/level.

[0087]

In step (a1), the “expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region” is as mentioned in the section “2. Expression cassette”. However, the expression cassette in step (a1) is different from the expression cassette in the section “2. Expression cassette” in that the expression cassette in step (a1) includes an expression cassette containing an endogenous RBMS gene expression regulation region in the genome of a cell and RBMS gene located downstream from the region.

[0088]

In step (a1), the “expression system” is not particularly limited, as long as a component necessary for the expression of a gene from the expression cassette is contained. Examples of the expression system include a cell-free protein expression system and a cell. The cell-free protein expression system is generally consisting of a solution (e.g., a liquid extract from cells) containing a factor necessary for transcription and translation (e.g., an RNA polymerase, a ribosome, any one of various ribonucleotides), and a commercially available product may be used. The cell is not particularly limited, as long as a gene can be expressed from the expression cassette in the cell. Examples of the cell include a cell derived from any one of various tissues or a cell having any one of various properties, such as a blood cell, a hematopoietic stem cell/ progenitor cell, a gamete (a sperm, an ovum), a fibroblast, an epithelial cell, a vascular endothelial cell, a nerve cell, a liver cell, a keratin generating cell, a muscle cell, an epidermal cell, an endocrine cell, an ES cell, an iPS cell, a tissue stem cell and a cancer cell. From the viewpoint that the screening can be performed more easily, the expression system is preferably a cell.

[0089]

In step (a1), in the case where the expression system containing the expression cassette is a cell-free protein expression system, it is preferred that the expression cassette is contained in the solution in the system. In the case where the expression system is a cell, there are an aspect where the expression cassette is integrated into the genome of the cell, an aspect where the expression cassette is present outside of the genome of the cell (e.g., in the form of a plasmid), and the like.

[0090]

In step (a1), the aspect of bringing the test substance into contact is not particularly limited. In the case where the expression system is a cell-free protein expression system, it is preferred to add the test substance to the solution in the system, for example. In the case where the expression system is a cell, it is preferred to add the test substance to a cell culture medium, for example.

[0091]

In step (a1), the contacting time of the test substance is not particularly limited, and can be set appropriately depending on the type of the test substance, the type of the expression system and others. The time is, for example, 5 minutes to 72 hours.

[0092]

In step (b1), the measurement of the expression amount/level of interest and the control expression amount/level can be carried out in accordance with or based on a known method. It is preferred to carry out the measurement using the diagnostic agent of the present invention mentioned above. In the case where the substance to be measured is a nucleic acid (RBMS mRNA or a nucleic acid derived therefrom (e.g., cDNA)), the measurement can be carried out by a northern blotting method, a RT-PCR method, a DNA chip analysis method, an *in situ* hybridization analysis method or the like using the nucleic acid as a probe or a primer, for example. In the case where the substance to be measured is a protein, the measurement can be carried out by a western blotting method, an ELISA method or the like using a specific antibody. In the case where the substance to be measured is a reporter protein, the measurement can be carried out by a method capable of detecting a reporter signal (e.g., a fluorescence, a developed color, emitted light) coming from the reporter protein (e.g., the microscopic observation of fluorescence, a luciferase assay). In the case where the substance to be

measured is a drug-resistant protein, the measurement can be carried out indirectly by counting the number of cells surviving in the presence of the drug.

[0093]

In the case where a northern blotting method is employed, concretely, a method can be exemplified, in which a probe is labeled with a radioactive isotope (e.g., ^{32}P , ^{33}P : RI), a fluorescent substance or the like, then the labeled probe is hybridized with mRNA derived from the expression system and transferred onto a nylon membrane or the like in the conventional manner, and then a double strand formed by the diagnostic agent and mRNA derived from the sample from the subject is subjected to the detection and measurement of a signal coming from a labeled probe (a labeling substance such as an RI or a fluorescent substance) using a radioactive ray detector BAS-1800II (manufactured by Fujifilm Corporation), a fluorescence detector or the like.

Alternatively, a method may also be employed, in which the diagnostic agent is labeled using AlkPhos Direct Labelling and Detection System (manufactured by Amersham Pharmacia Biotech) in accordance with the protocol, then the labeled diagnostic agent is hybridized with mRNA derived from the expression system, and then a signal coming from a labeled product of the diagnostic agent is detected and measured using a multibioimager STORM860 (manufactured by Amersham Pharmacia Biotech).

[0094]

In the case where a RT-PCR method is employed, concretely, a method can be exemplified, in which cDNA is prepared from RNA derived from the expression system in the conventional manner, then a pair of primers prepared from the diagnostic agent of the present invention (i.e., a positive strand capable of binding to the cDNA (- strand), a negative strand capable of binding to + strand) are hybridized with the cDNA to perform a PCR method so that a target region can be amplified using the cDNA as a

template, and then amplified double-stranded DNA thus produced is detected. For the detection of the amplified double-stranded DNA, a method in which the above-mentioned PCR is carried out using a primer that is labeled with an RI or a fluorescent substance in advance to detect labeled double-stranded DNA produced; a method in which double-stranded DNA thus produced is transferred onto a nylon membrane or the like in the conventional manner, then the labeled probe is used as a probe and is hybridized with the double-stranded DNA, and then a hybridized product is detected; and other method can be employed. In this regard, a labeled double-stranded DNA product thus produced can be measured using an arrangement 2100 bioanalyzer (manufactured by Yokogawa Analytical Systems, Inc.) or the like. Alternatively, it is also possible to prepare a RT-PCR reaction solution using SYBR Green RT-PCR Reagents (manufactured by Applied Biosystems) in accordance with the protocol, then react the reaction solution using ABI PRISM 7700 Sequence Detection System (manufactured by Applied Biosystems), and then detect a reaction product.

[0095]

In the case where DNA chip analysis is utilized, a method can be mentioned, in which a DNA chip to which a (single-stranded or double-stranded) DNA probe is attached is provided, then the DNA chip is hybridized with cRNA prepared from RNA derived from the expression system in the conventional manner to produce a double-stranded product formed from the DNA and the cRNA, then the double-stranded product is bonded to a labeling probe prepared from the diagnostic agent of the present invention, and then the bonded product is detected.

[0096]

As the western blotting method, a method can be exemplified, in which a primary antibody is used, then a labeled antibody (an antibody capable of binding to the

primary antibody) that is labeled with a radioactive isotope such as ^{125}I , a fluorescent substance, an enzyme such as horseradish peroxidase (HRP) or the like is used as a secondary antibody, and a signal coming from the labeling substance, e.g., the radioactive isotope, the fluorescent substance or the like, in the labeled compound is detected using a radioactive ray measurement device BAS-1800II (manufactured by Fujifilm Corporation), a fluorescence detector or the like. Alternatively, it is also possible to use a primary antibody, then the signal is detected using ECL Plus Western Blotting Detection System (manufactured by Amersham Pharmacia Biotech) in accordance with the protocol and is then measured using multibioimager STORM860 (manufactured by Amersham Pharmacia Biotech).

[0097]

In step (c1), for example, in the case where the expression amount/level of interest is smaller than the control expression amount/level, for example when the expression amount/level of interest is smaller by 1/2, 1/5, 1/10, 1/20, 1/50 or 1/100 than that of the control expression amount/level, the test substance can be selected as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor or a candidate substance for the active ingredient.

[0098]

3-2. Screening method utilizing index (ii)

The screening method utilizing index (ii) includes steps (a2) to (c2):

(a2) bringing RNA containing an AU-rich element into contact with RBMS in the presence of a test substance;

(b2) measuring the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the presence of the test substance as a binding amount/level of interest, and then comparing the binding amount/level of interest with a

control binding amount/level that is the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the absence of the test substance; and

(c2) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the binding amount/level of interest is smaller than the control binding amount/level.

[0099]

In step (a2), the “AU-rich element” refers to an element in which a nucleotide sequence represented by general formula: $(U)_n W^1 (U)_m W^2 (U)_o$ [wherein U represents an uracil; W^1 and W^2 may be the same as or different from each other and independently represent an adenine or uracil (provided that a case where each of W^1 and W^2 represents an uracil is excluded); n represents an integer of 0 to 3; o represents an integer of 0 to 3; and m represents an integer of 3 to 5 (preferably 3)] typified by a sequence AUUUA is a consensus sequence. The AU-rich element is preferably an AU-rich element derived from mRNA of an inflammation promoting factor (e.g., at least one type of mRNA selected from the group consisting of IL-6 mRNA, COX-2 mRNA, IL-8 mRNA, IL-1 β mRNA, TNF- α mRNA, MMP1 mRNA, IL-24 mRNA and c-Myc mRNA). In other words, the term “an AU-rich element derived from ...” refers to an AU-rich element contained in each of these mRNA.

[0100]

In step (a2), the RNA containing an AU-rich element is not particularly limited, as long as the RNA contains the AU-rich element. The number of the AU-rich elements in the RNA is, for example, 1 to 20, preferably 2 to 15, more preferably 3 to 12, further preferably 4 to 10, still further preferably 6 to 9. When the number of the AU-rich elements in the RNA is multiple, it is desirable that the AU-rich elements are present in a relatively narrow region (e.g., 20 to 400 bp, preferably 40 to 200 bp, more preferably

60 to 150 bp, further preferably 80 to 120 bp). It is preferred that the region is U-rich. The degree of U-richness is as follows: the rate of the number of U residues relative to the total number of nucleotides in the region is, for example, 20% or more, preferably 30% or more, more preferably 50% or more. The upper limit of the ratio is not particularly limited, and examples of the upper limit include 90%, 80%, 70% and the like.

[0101]

In step (a2), the RBMS is the same as that in the RBMS protein mentioned in the section “2. Expression cassette”.

[0102]

In step (a2), the aspect of bringing the test substance into contact is not particularly limited, as long as the three components, i.e., the RNA containing an AU-rich element, RBMS and the test substance, can be contacted with one another. For example, an aspect where the three components are mixed together in a proper solvent, an aspect where the three components are allowed to co-exist in a cell, and the like can be mentioned.

[0103]

In step (a2), the contacting time of the test substance is not particularly limited, and can be set appropriately depending on the type of the test substance, whether the contact is achieved in a test tube or in a cell, or the like. The time is, for example, 5 minutes to 72 hours.

[0104]

In step (b2), the measurement of the binding amount/level of interest and the control binding amount/level can be carried out by or in accordance with a known

method. For example, the measurement can be carried out by an immunoprecipitation method, a gel shift method or the like.

[0105]

The immunoprecipitation method can be carried out typically in the following manner. A cell lysate each containing RNA containing an AU-rich element and RBMS (and being in contact with the test substance or being not in contact with the test substance) is prepared, then the lysate is immunoprecipitated with an antibody directed against RBMS or an antibody directed against a tag in the case where the tag is attached to the RBMS, and then the amount/level of “RNA containing an AU-rich element” contained in a precipitate is measured by a PCR. It is demonstrated that the binding amount/level of interest or the control binding amount/level becomes larger with the increase in the measured amount/level.

[0106]

A gel shift method can be carried out typically in the following manner. A solution containing the RNA containing an AU-rich element and RBMS (and further containing the test substance or not containing the test substance) is electrophoresed using a proper gel (e.g., an acrylamide gel), and then a signal of a band that indicates a complex of the RNA containing an AU-rich element and RBMS which are bonded together is measured. It is demonstrated that the binding amount/level of interest or the control binding amount/level becomes larger with the increase in the measured amount/level.

[0107]

In step (c2), for example, in the case where the binding amount/level of interest is smaller than the control binding amount/level, the test substance can be selected as a substance capable of inhibiting the expression of RBMS when the binding amount/level

of interest is smaller by 1/2, 1/5, 1/10, 1/20, 1/50 1/100 than the control binding amount/level.

[0108]

3-3. Screening method utilizing index (iii)

The screening method utilizing index (iii) includes steps (a3) to (c3):

(a3) bringing a cell which contains mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof and in which RBMS is overexpressed into contact with a test substance;

(b3) measuring the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in the cell that has been contacted with the test substance as an amount/level of interest, and then comparing the amount/level of interest with a control amount/level that is the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in a cell that is not contacted with the test substance; and

(c3) selecting the test substance as a substance capable of inhibiting the function of RBMS when the amount/level of interest is smaller than the control amount/level.

[0109]

In step (a3), the AU-rich element is the same as that mentioned in the section "3-2. Screening method utilizing index (ii)".

[0110]

In step (a3), the mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof is not particularly limited, as long as the mRNA contains an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof. The number of AU-rich elements in the 3'-UTR of the mRNA is, for example, 1 to 20, preferably 2 to 15, more preferably 3 to 12, further preferably 4 to 10, and still further preferably 6 to 9. In the case where the number of AU-rich elements in the mRNA is multiple, it is desirable that the AU-rich elements are present in a relatively

narrow region (e.g., 20 to 400, preferably 40 to 200, more preferably 60 to 150, further preferably 80 to 120).

[0111]

In step (a3), the mRNA containing an AU-rich element in the 3'-UTR thereof is preferably mRNA for an inflammation promoting factor, more preferably IL-6 mRNA, COX-2 mRNA, IL-8 mRNA, IL-1 β mRNA, TNF- α mRNA, MMP1 mRNA, IL-24 mRNA, c-Myc mRNA or the like, or a variant of any one of these mRNA molecules. As the variant, mRNA in which one or several (e.g., 2 to 50, preferably 2 to 20, more preferably 2 to 10, further preferably 2 to 5, still further preferably 2 or 3) nucleotides are substituted, deleted, added or inserted preferably in a sequence other than the AU-rich element or a part of the AU-rich element can be mentioned.

[0112]

In step (a3), the RBMS is the same as the RBMS protein in the section "2. Expression cassette".

[0113]

In step (a3), the cell is the same as the cell in the section "3-1. Screening method utilizing index (i)".

[0114]

In step (a3), the aspect of bringing the test substance into contact is not particularly limited. For example, an aspect where the test substance is added to the cell culture medium can be mentioned.

[0115]

In step (a3), the contacting time of the test substance is not particularly limited, and can be set appropriately depending on the type of the test substance and the like. The time is, for example, 5 minutes to 72 hours.

[0116]

In step (b3), the measurement of the amount/level of interest and the control amount/level is carried out in the same manner as in the measurement of the expression amount/level of interest and the control expression amount/level in the section “3-1. Screening method utilizing index (i)”.

[0117]

In step (c3), in the case where the amount/level of interest is smaller than the control amount/level, the test substance can be selected as a substance capable of inhibiting the expression of RBMS when the amount/level of interest is smaller by 1/2, 1/5, 1/10, 1/20, 1/50 or 1/100 than the control amount/level.

[0118]

4. Inhibitor of expression of inflammation promoting factor

The present invention relates to an inhibitor of the expression of an inflammation promoting factor (wherein the inhibitor is also referred to as “the agent of the present invention” in the description) which contains at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS expression inhibitor and a RBMS function inhibitor. Hereinbelow, the inhibitor will be described.

[0119]

The RBMS of which the expression and function are to be inhibited is the same as the RBMS protein in the section “2. Expression cassette” above.

[0120]

The RBMS expression inhibitor is not particularly limited, as long as the inhibitor can reduce the expression amount/level of RBMS protein. Specific examples of the inhibitor include RBMS-specific small interfering RNA (siRNA), RBMS-specific microRNA (miRNA), a RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid, and expression vectors

therefore. In addition, it is mentioned in the section “Examples” that IL-10 protein can act as a RBMS expression inhibitor.

[0121]

The RBMS-specific siRNA is not particularly limited, as long as the siRNA is a double-stranded RNA molecule capable of specifically inhibiting the expression of a gene encoding RBMS. In one embodiment, the siRNA preferably has a length of 18 nucleotides or more, 19 nucleotides or more, 20 nucleotides or more, or 21 nucleotides or more. The siRNA preferably has a length of, for example, 25 nucleotides or less, 24 nucleotides or less, 23 nucleotides or less, or 22 nucleotides or less. It is conceived that the value of the upper limit and the value of the lower limit of the length of the siRNA which are mentioned herein can be combined arbitrarily. For example, the following combinations of the length can be conceived: a length in which the lower limit is 18 nucleotides and the upper limit is 25 nucleotides, 24 nucleotides, 23 nucleotides, or 22 nucleotides; a length in which the lower limit is 19 nucleotides and the upper limit is 25 nucleotides, 24 nucleotides, 23 nucleotides, or 22 nucleotides; a length in which the lower limit is 20 nucleotides and the upper limit is 25 nucleotides, 24 nucleotides, 23 nucleotides, or 22 nucleotides; and a length in which the lower limit is 21 nucleotides and the upper limit is 25 nucleotides, 24 nucleotides, 23 nucleotides, or 22 nucleotides.

[0122]

The siRNA may be shRNA (small hairpin RNA). The shRNA can be designed so that a part thereof forms a stem loop structure. For example, when a sequence lying in a specific region is named “sequence a” and a complementary strand to the sequence a is named “sequence b”, the shRNA can be designed in such a manner that the sequence a, a spacer and the sequence b are arranged in this order on a single RNA strand and the whole length becomes 45 to 60 nucleotides. The sequence a is a

sequence for a partial region of the nucleotide sequence encoding the target RBMS, and the target region is not limited particularly, and an arbitrary region can be employed as a candidate. The length of the sequence a is 19 to 25 nucleotides, preferably 19 to 21 nucleotides.

[0123]

The RBMS-specific siRNA may have additional nucleotides at the 5'- or 3'-terminal thereof. The length of the additional nucleotides is generally about 2 to 4 nucleotides. The additional nucleotides may be in the form of DNA or RNA. When additional nucleotides are in the form of DNA, the stability of the nucleic acid may be improved. Examples of the sequence for the additional nucleotides include, but are not limited to, ug-3', uu-3', tg-3', tt-3', ggg-3', guuu-3', gttt-3', tttt-3' and uuuuu-3'.

[0124]

The siRNA may have an overhang at the 3'-terminal thereof, and a specific example of the overhang is dTdT (wherein dT represents a deoxythymidine). Alternatively, the siRNA may have a blunt end without the addition of a terminal. In the siRNA, the number of nucleotides in a sense strand may be different from that in an antisense strand. For example, the siRNA may be "asymmetrical interfering RNA (aiRNA)" in which the antisense strand has an overhang at each of the 3'-terminal and the 5'-terminal. Typical aiRNA is one in which the antisense strand is consisting of 21 nucleotides, the sense strand is consisting of 15 nucleotides, and an overhang structure consisting of 3 nucleotides is formed at each terminal of the antisense strand.

[0125]

The position of the target sequence in the RBMS-specific siRNA is not particularly limited. In one embodiment, it is desirable to select the target sequence from a 5'-UTR and a sequence lying between the initiation codon and about 50th

nucleotide from the initiation codon and not to select the target sequence from a 3'-UTR. It is preferred that candidates for the selected target sequence are determined with respect to the matter that there is no homology in a sequence consisting of contiguous 16 to 17 nucleotides in mRNA other than the target sequence using a homology search software such as BLAST (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/BLAST/>), and the specificity of the selected target sequence is confirmed. With respect to a target sequence of which the specificity has been confirmed, double-stranded RNA which is consisting of a sense strand having a 3'-terminal TT or UU overhang in a sequence lying between 19st nucleotide and 21st nucleotide following AA (or NA) and an antisense strand which is consisting of a sequence complementary to the sequence lying between 19st nucleotide and 21st nucleotide and a 3'-terminal TT or UU overhang may be designed as the siRNA. shRNA, which is a precursor of the siRNA, can be designed by appropriately selecting an arbitrary linker sequence (e.g., about 5 to 25 nucleotides) that can form a loop structure and then connecting the sense strand to the antisense strand with the linker sequence interposed therebetween.

[0126]

The sequence for the siRNA and/or the shRNA can be searched using various search software which is provided for free on web sites. Examples of the sites are as follows.

siRNA Target Finder (http://www.ambion.com/jp/techlib/misc/siRNA_finder.html)

provided by Ambion,

pSilencer (registered trademark) Insert design tool for Expression Vectors

(http://www.ambion.com/jp/techlib/misc/psilencer_converter.html)

GeneSeer (<http://codex.cshl.edu/scripts/newsearchhairpin.cgi>) provided by RNAi Codex.

[0127]

The siRNA can be prepared by separately synthesizing an sense strand and an antisense strand in the target sequenced on mRNA using a DNA/RNA automatic synthesizer, then denaturing these strands in a proper annealing buffer solution at about 90 to 95°C for about 1 minute and then annealing the resultant product at about 30 to about 70°C for about 1 to about 8 hours. Alternatively, the siRNA may also be prepared by synthesizing shRNA that is a precursor of the siRNA and then cutting the shRNA with a RNA cutting protein dicer.

[0128]

The RBMS-specific miRNA may be any one, as long as the miRNA can inhibit the translation of a gene encoding RBMS. For example, the miRNA may inhibit the translation of target mRNA by forming a pair with a 3'-untranslated region (UTR) in the target rather than by cutting the target mRNA like siRNA. The miRNA may be any one of pri-miRNA (primary miRNA), pre-miRNA (precursor miRNA) and mature miRNA. The length of the miRNA is not particularly limited, and the length of the pri-miRNA is generally several hundreds to several thousands of nucleotides, the length of the pre-miRNA is generally 50 to 80 nucleotides, and the length of the mature miRNA is generally 18 to 30 nucleotides. In one embodiment, the RBMS-specific miRNA is preferably pre-miRNA or mature miRNA, more preferably mature miRNA. The RBMS-specific miRNA may be synthesized by a known procedure, or may be purchased from a synthetic RNA supplier company.

[0129]

The RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid contains a nucleotide sequence complementary or substantially complementary to the nucleotide sequence for mRNA of a gene encoding RBMS or a part of the nucleotide sequence, and has a function to form a specific and stable double strand with the mRNA and bind to the mRNA so as to

inhibit the synthesis of RBMS protein. The antisense nucleic acid may be any one selected from DNA, RNA and DNA/RNA chimera. In the case where the antisense nucleic acid is DNA, an RNA:DNA hybrid formed from a target RNA and the antisense DNA can be recognized by endogenous ribonuclease H (RNase H) to cause the selective degradation of the target RNA. Therefore, in the case of antisense DNA that directs the degradation with RNase H, the target sequence may be contained in mRNA as well as a sequence for an intron region in an RBMS initial translation product. The intron sequence can be determined by comparing the genome sequence with cDNA nucleotide sequence in RBMS gene using a homology search program such as BLAST and FASTA. [0130]

The length of the target region in the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid is not particularly limited, as long as the antisense nucleic acid can hybridize with the target region so as to inhibit the translation into RBMS protein. The RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid may be the full length or a partial sequence of mRNA encoding RBMS. From the viewpoint of easiness of the synthesis and the problems of antigenicity and intracellular migration and the like, an oligonucleotide having a length of about 10 to about 40 nucleotides, particularly about 15 to about 30 nucleotides, is preferred, but the oligonucleotide is not limited thereto. More concretely, a preferred target region for the antisense nucleic acid can be selected from a 5'-terminal hairpin loop, a 5'-terminal untranslated region, a translation initiation codon, a protein coding region, an ORF translation stop codon, a 3'-terminal untranslated region, a 3'-terminal palindrome region and a 3'-terminal hairpin loop of RBMS gene, but is not limited thereto.

[0131]

The RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid may also be one which can hybridize with mRNA for RBMS gene or an initial transcription product of the mRNA to inhibit the translation into a protein and can also bind to these genes, each of which is double-stranded DNA, to form a triplex so as to inhibit the transcription into RNA (i.e., an antigene).

[0132]

Each of nucleotide molecules that constitute the RBMS-specific siRNA, the RBMS-specific miRNA and the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid may contain various chemical modification for the purpose of improving (chemical and/or enzymatical) stability or specific activity (affinity for RNA). For example, in order to prevent the degradation caused by a hydrolysis enzyme such as a nuclease, a phosphate residue (phosphate) in each of the nucleotides constituting the antisense nucleic acid may be substituted by, for example, a chemically modified phosphate residue such as phosphorothioate (PS), methylphosphonate and phosphorodithioate. Alternatively, the hydroxyl group at 2'-position in a ribose in each nucleotide may be substituted by -OR (R = CH₃(2'-O-Me), CH₂CH₂OCH₃(2'-O-MOE), CH₂CH₂NHC(NH)NH₂, CH₂CONHCH₃, or CH₂CH₂CN, etc.). In addition, the base moiety (pyrimidine, purine) may be chemically modified. For example, the introduction of a methyl group or a cationic functional group to the 5'-position in a pyrimidine base, the substitution of a carbonyl group at 2'-position by a thiocarbonyl group, or the like may be applied. In addition, a part of each of the nucleotide molecules that constitute siRNA and miRNA may be substituted by naturally occurring DNA.

[0133]

The RBMS-specific siRNA, the RBMS-specific miRNA, the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid and the like can be prepared by determining mRNA or a target

sequence for an initial transcription product on the basis of the cDNA sequence or the genomic DNA sequence for RBMS gene and then synthesizing a sequence complementary to the sequence using a commercially available DNA/RNA automatic synthesizer. The antisense nucleic acid containing the above-mentioned modifications can also be chemically synthesized by a known technique.

[0134]

The expression vector for the RBMS-specific siRNA, the RBMS-specific miRNA or the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid is not particularly limited, as long as the RBMS-specific siRNA, the RBMS-specific miRNA or the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid is integrated in an expressible state. Typically, the expression vector contains a promoter sequence, a polynucleotide containing a sequence encoding the RBMS-specific siRNA, the RBMS-specific miRNA or the RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid (optionally also containing a transcription stop signal sequence) and optionally other sequence. The promoter is not particularly limited, and examples of the promoter include an RNA polymerase II (polII)-type promoter, such as a CMV promoter, an EF1 promoter, an SV40 promoter, a MSCV promoter, a hTERT promoter, a β -actin promoter and a CAG promoter; and a RNA polymerase III (polIII)-type promoter, such as a mouse or human U6-snRNA promoter, a human H1-RNase P RNA promoter and a human valine -tRNA promoter. Among these promoters, a polIII-type promoter is preferred from the viewpoint of the correct transcription ability of short RNA. The “other sequence” is not particularly limited, and any one of various known sequences which can be contained in expression vectors can be employed. Examples of the sequence include a replication origin and a drug-resistant gene. As the types of the drug-resistant gene and the vector, those mentioned above can be exemplified.

[0135]

Another example of the RBMS expression inhibitor is a RBMS-specific ribozyme. The term “ribozyme” refers to RNA having an enzymatic activity to cleave a nucleic acid in the narrow sense. In the present application, however, DNA can also be included, as long as the DNA has a sequence-specific nucleic acid cleavage activity. The ribozyme having the broadest utility as a ribozyme nucleic acid is self-splicing RNA that is found in infectious RNA such as a viroid and a virusoid, and a hammerhead-type, hairpin-type and the like are known. A hammerhead-type ribozyme nucleic acid can exhibit the enzymatic activity thereof when the length is about 40 nucleotides, and can cleave only target mRNA specifically by converting several nucleotides located in both ends adjacent to a hammerhead structure-forming part (about 10 nucleotides in total) into sequences complementary to a desired cleavage site in mRNA. The ribozyme nucleic acid of this type can utilize only RNA as the substrate thereof, and therefore has such an advantage that the ribozyme nucleic acid never attacks genomic DNA. In the case where the mRNA for the RBMS gene forms a double-stranded structure by itself, the target sequence can be made into a single strand by using a hybrid ribozyme to which an RNA motif derived from a viral nucleic acid and capable of binding specifically to an RNA helicase is linked [Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, 98(10): 5572-5577 (2001)]. In the case where it is intended to use the ribozyme in the form of an expression vector containing DNA encoding the ribozyme, the ribozyme may be used in the form of a hybrid ribozyme to which a tRNA-modified sequence is linked in order to accelerate the migration of a transcript into a cell cytoplasm [Nucleic Acids Res., 29(13): 2780-2788 (2001)].

[0136]

The RBMS function inhibitor is not limited particularly, as long as the inhibitor can inhibit the function of RBMS protein. The wording “inhibition of the function of

RBMS protein” refers to (x) the matter that the binding amount/level between RBMS and RNA containing an AU-rich element is reduced and/or (y) the matter that the amount/level of mRNA containing an AU-rich element in the 3'-UTR thereof or the amount/level of a protein derived from the mRNA in an RBMS-overexpressing cell is reduced. Whether or not the function of RBMS protein is inhibited can be determined by, for example, the methods mentioned in the sections “3-2. Screening method utilizing index (ii)” and “3-3. Screening method utilizing index (iii)” below.

[0137]

The cancer promoting factor of which the expression is to be inhibited by the agent of the present invention is not particularly limited, as long as the cancer promoting factor is a factor capable of contributing to the improvement of a cell growth inhibiting ability, a cell migration inhibiting ability, a cell infiltration inhibiting ability, a cancer cell metastasis inhibiting ability and the like. Examples of the factor include CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLA1, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[0138]

The inhibitor of the present invention can be used as a preventing or treating agent for cancer. The inhibitor of the present invention can also be used as a cell growth inhibitor, a cell migration inhibitor, a cell infiltration inhibitor, a cancer cell metastasis inhibitor and the like.

[0139]

The agent of the present invention is not particularly limited, as long as the agent contains at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS expression inhibitor and a RBMS function inhibitor (wherein the component is also

simply referred to as an “active ingredient” in the description). The agent may additionally contain other component, if necessary. The “other component” is not particularly limited, as long as the component is a pharmaceutically acceptable component. Examples of the “other component” include a base material, a carrier, a solvent, a dispersant, an emulsifying agent, a buffering agent, a stabilizer, an excipient, a binder, a disintegrating agent, a lubricant, a thickening agent, a moisturizing agent, a coloring agent, a fragrance and a chelating agent.

[0140]

The mode of the usage of the agent of the present invention is not particularly limited, and a proper usage mode can be selected depending on the type of the agent. The agent of the present invention may be used *in vitro* (e.g., may be added to a culture medium for cultured cells) or may be used *in vivo* (e.g., may be administered to an animal).

[0141]

The subject to which the agent of the present invention is to be applied is not particularly limited, and examples of the subject include various mammals such as human, monkey, mouse, rat, dog, cat, rabbit, pig, horse, cow, sheep, goat and deer; and animal cells. The type of the cell is not particularly limited, either. For example, a blood cell, a hematopoietic stem cell/ progenitor cell, a gamete (a sperm, an ovum), a fibroblast, an epithelial cell, a vascular endothelial cell, a nerve cell, a liver cell, a keratin generating cell, a muscle cell, an epidermal cell, an endocrine cell, an ES cell, an iPS cell, a tissue stem cell, a cancer cell and the like can be mentioned.

[0142]

The dosage form of the agent of the present invention is not particularly limited, and a proper dosage form may be selected depending on the mode of the usage of the

agent. For example, in the case where it is intended to administer the agent to an animal, examples of the dosage form include an oral preparation such as a tablet, a capsule, a granule, a powder, a fine granule, a syrup, an enteric preparation, a sustained release capsule, a chewable tablet, a drop, a pill, a liquid or solution for oral application, a lozenge, a sustained-release preparation and sustained-release granule; and a preparation for cutaneous application such as a nasal preparation, an inhalation, a suppository for rectal application, a pessary, an enema and a jelly. The agent of the present invention may have any dosage form selected from a solid dosage form, a semi-solid dosage form and a liquid dosage form.

[0143]

The content of the active ingredient in the agent of the present invention is not limited and varies depending on the intended use of the agent, a subject of the application of the agent, the condition of a subject of the application of the agent, and the like. The content is, for example, 0.0001 to 100% by weight, preferably 0.001 to 50% by weight.

[0144]

In the case where it is intended to administer the agent to an animal, the dose of the agent to be administered is not particularly limited, as long as the dose is a dose effective for developing the pharmacological activity of the agent. The dose is generally 0.1 to 1000 mg/kg body weight per day, preferably 0.5 to 500 mg/kg body weight per day, in terms of the weight of the active ingredient for oral administration, and is generally 0.01 to 100 mg/kg body weight, preferably 0.05 to 50 mg/kg body weight per day, in terms of the weight of the active ingredient for parenteral administration. The dose is preferably administered in 1, 2 or 3 divided doses, per day,

and may be increased or decreased appropriately depending on the age, clinical condition and disease conditions of a subject.

[0145]

5. Diagnostic agent

The present invention relates to a diagnostic agent for a disease in an animal, which contains a RBMS gene expression product detecting agent (wherein the diagnostic agent is also referred to as a “diagnostic agent of the present invention” in the present description). Hereinbelow, the diagnostic agent will be described.

[0146]

The RBMS gene expression product which is to be detected with the RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is not particularly limited, as long as the RBMS gene expression product is one which is expressed in a living body of an organism to be diagnosed. Examples of the RBMS gene expression product include RBMS mRNA or a nucleic acid (e.g., cDNA) derived from the RBMS mRNA, RBMS protein and the like.

[0147]

The animal to be diagnosed is not particularly limited, as long as the animal can express RBMS gene *in vivo*. Examples of the animal include various mammals such as human, monkey, mouse, rat, dog, cat and rabbit.

[0148]

With respect to the RBMS gene expression product that is a substance to be detected, the same statements can apply to the statements mentioned with respect to the RBMS protein and the RBMS mRNA in the section “2. Screening reagent” above.

[0149]

The RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is not particularly limited, as long as the detection and the quantification of the RBMS gene expression product as

mentioned above can be achieved. In the case where the RBMS gene expression product is a nucleic acid (e.g., RBMS mRNA, a nucleic acid derived therefrom (e.g., cDNA)), examples of the RBMS gene expression product detecting agent include a primer and a probe. In the case where the RBMS gene expression product is a protein, an example of the RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is an antibody.

[0150]

The primer, the probe or the like is not particularly limited, as long as RBMS mRNA, a nucleic acid derived therefrom or the like can be recognized selectively (specifically). The wording “recognize (recognizing) selectively (specifically)” as used herein refers to, but is not limited to, the matter that RBMS mRNA can be detected specifically in a northern blotting method, the matter that RBMS mRNA or a nucleic acid derived therefrom (e.g., cDNA) can be amplified specifically in a RT-PCR method, for example. The primer, the probe or the like may be any one, as long as a person skilled in the art can determine that the above-mentioned detected substance or amplified product is derived from RBMS mRNA.

[0151]

Specific examples of the primer or the probe include at least one substance selected from the group consisting of a polynucleotide mentioned in item (e) and a polynucleotide mentioned in item (f):

(e) a polynucleotide having at least 15 contiguous nucleotides in the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA and/or a polynucleotide complementary to the polynucleotide; and

(f) a polynucleotide which can hybridize with the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA or a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA under stringent conditions and has at least 15 nucleotides.

[0152]

The term “a complementary polynucleotide” or “a complementary nucleotide sequence (a complementary strand, a negative strand) refers to a polynucleotide or a nucleotide sequence which is complementary to the full length sequence of a polynucleotide consisting of the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA or a partial sequence of the full length sequence which has a nucleotide sequence consisting of at least 15 contiguous nucleotides in the above-mentioned nucleotide sequence (wherein each of the full length sequence and the partial sequence is referred to as a “positive strand” for convenience) on the basis of the nucleotide base pair relationship of A:T and G:C. In this regard, the complementary strand is not limited to one that can form a completely complementary sequence with the nucleotide sequence for the positive strand, and may also be one which has a complementary relationship with the positive strand of interest to such an extent that the complementary strand can hybridize with the positive strand under stringent conditions. The stringent conditions can be determined on the basis of the melting temperature (T_m) of a nucleic acid to which a complex or a probe is to be bonded, as taught by Berger and Kimmel (1987, Guide to Molecular Cloning Techniques Methods in Enzymology, Vol. 152, Academic Press, San Diego CA). For example, as the washing conditions after hybridization, the conditions around “1×SSC, 0.1%SDS, 37°C” can be mentioned. It is preferred that the complementary strand can be maintained in such a state that the complementary strand is hybridized with the positive strand of interest even when the complementary strand is washed under these conditions. Examples of the washing conditions include, but are not limited to around “0.5×SSC, 0.1%SDS, 42°C” as more stringent hybridization conditions, around “0.1×SSC, 0.1%SDS, 65°C” as still more stringent conditions. Concrete examples of the complementary strand include a strand consisting of a nucleotide

sequence completely complementary to the nucleotide sequence for the positive strand of interest, and a strand consisting of a nucleotide sequence having at least 90%, preferably 95%, more preferably 98% or more, further preferably 99% or more identity to the strand.

[0153]

The primer, the probe or the like can be designed by utilizing a vector NTI (manufactured by Infomax) on the basis of the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA, such as a nucleotide sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3, 4, or 7. Concretely, the probe or the like can be obtained by applying the nucleotide sequence for RBMS mRNA to software of vector NTI. It is also possible to use a candidate sequence for the primer or probe or a sequence containing at least the sequence as a part thereof, as the primer or probe.

[0154]

The nucleotide length of the primer, probe or the like is not particularly limited, as long as the primer, probe or the like has a length consisting of at least contiguous 15 nucleotides as mentioned above. The length of the primer, probe or the like can be set appropriately depending on the intended use. For example, in the case where it is intended to use as a primer, the nucleotide length is, for example, 15 to 100 nucleotides, preferably 15 to 50 nucleotides, more preferably 15 to 35 nucleotides. In the case where it is intended to use as a probe, the nucleotide length is, for example, 15 nucleotides to total number of nucleotides in the entire sequence, preferably 15 to 1000 nucleotides, more preferably 100 to 1000 nucleotides.

[0155]

The primer, probe or the like may be modified, as long as the function thereof cannot be impaired significantly. Examples of the modification include the addition of a

labeling substance, such as a fluorescent dye, an enzyme, a protein, a radioactive isotope, a chemiluminescent substance and biotin.

[0156]

As the fluorescent dye to be used in the present invention, one which can label a nucleotide and can be used for the detection or quantification of a nucleic acid can be generally used. Specific examples of the fluorescent dye include, but are not limited to HEX (4,7,2',4',5',7'-hexachloro-6-carboxylfluorescein, a green fluorescent dye), fluorescein, NED (product name, manufactured by Applied Biosystems, a yellow fluorescent dye), 6-FAM (product name, manufactured by Applied Biosystems, a greenish yellow fluorescent dye), and rhodamine and a derivative thereof [e.g., tetramethyl rhodamine (TMR)]. As the method for labeling the nucleotide with a fluorescent dye, a proper method among known labeling methods can be employed [see Nature Biotechnology, 14, 303-308 (1996)]. Alternatively, a commercially available fluorescent labeling kit may also be used (e.g., an oligonucleotide ECL 3'-oligolabeling system, manufactured by Amersham Pharmacia).

[0157]

The primer may also be immobilized onto an arbitrary solid phase upon use. Therefore, in the diagnostic agent of the present invention, the probe (an oligo- or polynucleotide) can be provided in the form of an immobilized probe (e.g., a DNA chip, a cDNA microarray, an oligo DNA array, a membrane filter or the like, on each of which the probe is immobilized; which are collectively named "a DNA chip or the like", hereinafter).

[0158]

The solid phase to be used for the immobilization is not particularly limited, as long as an oligo- or polynucleotide can be immobilized thereon. Specific examples of

the solid phase include a glass plate, a nylon membrane, microbeads, a silicon chip, a capillary and other substrates. The immobilization of the oligo- or polynucleotide onto the solid phase may be performed by a method in which a previously synthesized oligo- or polynucleotide is applied on a solid phase or by a method in which a desired oligo- or polynucleotide is synthesized on a solid phase. The immobilization method to be employed is well known in the art depending on the type of the probe to be immobilized, such as a method in which a commercially available spotter (manufactured by Amersham) is used in a DNA microarray technique [e.g., *in situ* synthesis of an oligonucleotide by a photolithographic technique (Affymetrix) or an inkjet technique (Rosetta Inpharmatics)].

[0159]

The antibody or the like is not particularly limited, as long as the antibody or the like can recognize RBMS protein selectively (specifically). The wording “recognize selectively (specifically)” refers to the matter that RBMS protein can be detected specifically in, for example, a western blotting method or an ELISA method. The antibody or the like is not limited to the above-mentioned one, and may be any one as long as a person skilled in the art can determine that the substance to be detected is derived from RBMS protein.

[0160]

The antibody includes a polyclonal antibody, a monoclonal antibody, a chimeric antibody, a single-stranded antibody, or a part of the antibody which has an antigen-binding property, such as a Fab fragment and a fragment produced by a Fab expression library. An antibody having an antigen-binding property to a polypeptide generally consisting of at least contiguous 8 amino acid residues, preferably 15 amino acid residues, more preferably 20 amino acid residues, contained in the amino acid

sequence for RBMS protein can also be included within the scope of the antibody of the present invention.

[0161]

The method for producing these antibodies is already known, and the antibody of the present invention can be produced by this conventional method (Current protocols in Molecular Biology, Chapter 11.12 to 11.13(2000)). Concretely, in the case where the antibody of the present invention is a polyclonal antibody, the antibody can be obtained by using RBMS protein that is expressed in *Escherichia coli* or the like and then purified in the conventional manner, or by synthesizing an oligopeptide having a partial amino acid sequence of the RBMS protein in the conventional manner, then immunizing a non-human animal, e.g., a domestic rabbit, with the RBMS protein or the oligopeptide and then collecting the antibody from serum from the immunized animal in the conventional manner. On the other hand, in the case where the antibody is a monoclonal antibody, the antibody can be obtained by immunizing a non-human animal, e.g., a mouse, with RBMS protein that is expressed in *Escherichia coli* or the like and then purified in the conventional manner or an oligopeptide having a partial amino acid sequence of the RBMS protein to produce a spleen cell, then performing cell fusion of the spleen cell to a myeloma cell to prepare a hybridoma cell, and then collecting the antibody from the hybridoma cell (Current protocols in Molecular Biology edit. Ausubel et al. (1987) Publish. John Wiley and Sons. Section 11.4 to 11.11).

[0162]

The RBMS protein to be used as an immunizing antigen in the production of the antibody can be obtained on the basis of known gene sequence information by procedures including the cloning of DNA, the construction of plasmids, the transfection into a host cell, the culture of a transformant and the collection of a protein from a

culture. These procedures can be carried out by a method known to a person skilled in the art or a method disclosed in a document (Molecular Cloning, T. Maniatis et al., CSH Laboratory (1983), DNA Cloning, DM. Glover, IRL PRESS (1985)) or the like.

[0163]

Concretely, a protein that can be used as an immunizing antigen for the production of the antibody of the present invention can be obtained by producing recombinant DNA (expression vector) which enables the expression of a gene encoding RBMS to be expressed in a desired host cell, then introducing the recombinant DNA into a host cell to transform the host cell with the recombinant DNA to produce a transformant, then culturing the transformant to produce a culture, and then collecting the desired protein from the culture. Alternatively, a partial peptide of RBMS protein can also be produced by a conventional chemical synthesis method (peptide synthesis) in accordance with known gene sequence information.

[0164]

The antibody of the present invention may be prepared by using an oligopeptide having a partial amino acid sequence of RBMS protein. The oligo(poly)peptide to be used for the production of the antibody is not required to have a functional biological activity but desirably has the same immunogenic property as that of RBMS protein. An example of the antibody is an oligo(poly)peptide that preferably has the immunogenic property and is consisting of at least 8 contiguous amino acid residues, preferably 15 amino acid residues, more preferably 20 amino acid residues, in the amino acid sequence for the RBMS protein.

[0165]

The production of the antibody against the oligo(poly)peptide can be achieved by enhancing an immunological reaction using any one of various adjuvants depending

on a host to be used. Examples of the adjuvant include, but are not limited to Freund's adjuvant; a mineral gel such as aluminum hydroxide; a surface-active substance such as lysolecithin, pluronic polyol, a polyanion, a peptide, an oil emulsifying agent, keyhole limpet hemocyanin and dinitrophenol; and a human adjuvant such as BCG (Bacille Calmette-Guerin) and *Corynebacterium parvum*.

[0166]

The diagnostic agent of the present invention is not particularly limited, as long as the above-mentioned RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is contained. The diagnostic agent may be consisting of only the detection agent, or may additionally contain a substance necessary for the detection of a RBMS gene expression product in addition to the detection agent. Specific examples of the substance include a hybridization reagent, a label for a probe, a detection agent for a labeled substance, a buffer solution and a device. The diagnostic agent of the present invention may be in the form of a diagnostic agent kit including the above-mentioned components.

[0167]

The diagnostic agent of the present invention can be used for the diagnosis about the occurrence of the cancer (i.e., whether or not a subject is suffering from the cancer) and the diagnosis about the degree of progression of the above-mentioned disease of interest, as mentioned in the sections "6. Method for detection of disease" and "7. Method for determination of degree of progression of disease" below.

[0168]

6. Method for detection of disease

The present invention relates to a method for detecting a cancer (which is also referred to as the "disease detection method of the present invention" in the description),

using the expression amount/level of RBMS as an index. Hereinbelow, the method will be described.

[0169]

As a specific aspect of the disease detection method of the present invention, the following aspect can be mentioned:

(a1) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject; and

(b1) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a1) with a control expression amount/level of the RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject which does not suffer from the cancer,

wherein

(c1) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is higher than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has the cancer.

[0170]

The subject is a target to which the disease detection method of the present invention is to be applied, and the species of the subject is not particularly limited. Examples of the subject include various mammals including human, monkey, mouse, rat, dog, cat, rabbit and the like.

[0171]

The sample is not particularly limited, as long as a RBMS gene expression product is contained. The sample can be selected appropriately depending on the type of the disease to be detected and the like. Specific examples of the sample include a blood sample, a urine sample, and various tissue grafts. As the sample, a sample collected from a living organism may be used without any modification, and a sample

produced by purifying and concentrating a RBMS gene expression product to be detected in the conventional manner is preferred. In the case where the RBMS gene expression product to be detected is a nucleic acid, it is possible to prepare a nucleic acid (e.g., cDNA) that reflects the sequence information of RBMS mRNA from the mRNA and use the resultant product as the sample.

[0172]

The measurement of the expression amount/level of interest and the control expression amount/level of the RBMS gene expression product can be carried out by or in accordance with a known method. It is preferred to carry out the measurement using the diagnostic agent of the present invention mentioned below. In the case where the substance to be measured is a nucleic acid (RBMS mRNA or a nucleic acid derived therefrom (e.g., cDNA)), the measurement can be carried out by a northern blotting method, a RT-PCR method, a DNA chip analysis method, an *in situ* hybridization analysis method or the like using the nucleic acid as a probe or a primer, for example. In the case where the substance to be measured is a protein, the measurement can be carried out by a western blotting method, an ELISA method or the like using a specific antibody. The concrete manner of the method is as mentioned in the section “3.1 Screening method utilizing index (i)” above.

[0173]

The control expression amount/level, which is to be compared with the expression amount/level of interest, may be a control expression amount/level of a single sample. However, it is preferred to employ an average value or a mean value of control expression amount/levels of multiple samples.

[0174]

The determination whether or not a subject is suffering from a cancer is carried out by employing the matter that an expression amount/level of interest is larger compared with a control expression amount/level as a criterion. Concretely, for example, the determination can be carried out by employing, as an index, the matter that an expression amount/level of interest is increased by 50% or more, preferably 100% or more, more preferably 200% or more, relative to a control expression amount/level.

[0175]

7. Method for determination of degree of progression of disease

The present invention relates to a method for determining the degree of progression of a cancer employing the expression amount/level of RBMS as an index (wherein the method also referred to as “the method for determining the degree of progression of the present invention” in the description). Hereinbelow, the method will be described.

[0176]

As a specific aspect of the method for determining the degree of progression of the present invention, the following aspect can be mentioned:

(a2) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject suffering from the cancer; and

(b2) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a2) with a control expression amount/level of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject suffer from the cancer, wherein

(c3) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is larger than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has a higher degree of progression of the cancer than that of the control subject.

[0177]

The subject, the sample, the measurement of the expression amount/level of interest and the control expression amount/level, the control expression amount/level to be compared with the expression amount/level of interest, and the like are as described in the section “6. Method for detection of disease” above.

[0178]

The degree of progression of a disease can be defined as the severity of a condition associated with the expression of a cancer promoting factor such as CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

[0179]

The determination as to whether or not the degree of progression of a cancer in a subject is higher than that in a control subject can be determined by employing, as an index, the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is higher compared with the control expression amount/level. Concretely, the determination can be carried out by employing, as an index, the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is higher compared with the control expression amount/level by 50% or more, preferably 100% or more, more preferably 200% or more.

[Examples]

[0180]

Hereinbelow, the present invention will be described in detail with reference to examples. However, the present invention is not limited to these examples.

[0181]

Example 1: Identification of RBMS2 as IL-6 post-transcriptional regulatory factor

Example 1A

For the purpose of discovering an IL-6 post-transcriptional regulatory factor, screening was carried out. The schema is shown in Fig. 1A. Concretely, the following procedures were carried out. First, a reporter vector in which a luciferase ORF and an IL-6 3'UTR (SEQ ID NO: 1) were arranged downstream from a SV40 promoter in this order as observed from the 5' side was produced. The reporter vector and an expression vector for each of various genes were transfected into a HEK293T cell on a 384-well plate using a transfection reagent (Fugene HD, manufactured by Promega Corporation). 48 hours after the transfection, the luciferase activity in each well was measured. A measurement value thus obtained was compared with a measurement value of a control (i.e., a sample in which an empty vector was introduced as an expression vector), and an expression vector of which the measurement value was changed compared with the control was screened (primary screening). About 100 gene expression vectors which was correlated with RNA was picked up from the selected expression vectors, and the screening was carried out in the same manner as mentioned above (secondary screening).

[0182]

As a result of the secondary screening, RBMS2 (NP_002889.1, SEQ ID NO: 2) was identified as an IL-6 post-transcriptional regulatory factor.

[0183]

Example 1B

The reporter vector produced in Example 1A or a control reporter vector which was produced by removing a human IL-6 3'UTR from the reporter vector was introduced into a HEK 293 T cell together with a RBMS2 expression vector or an empty vector. 48 hours after the transfection, a luciferase activity was measured. The results are shown in Fig. 1B.

[0184]

As shown in Fig. 1B, RBMS2 increased a luciferase activity in an IL-6 3'UTR-dependent manner.

[0185]

Example 2: Stabilization of IL-6 mRNA by RBMS2 via ARE

A mutant 3'UTR reporter vector was produced, in which a luciferase ORF and a mutant IL-6 3'UTR (97-267 (nucleotide sequence: SEQ ID NO: 16), 122-193 (nucleotide sequence: SEQ ID NO: 17), Δ ARE1 (nucleotide sequence: SEQ ID NO: 18), Δ ARE2 (nucleotide sequence: SEQ ID NO: 19) or an ARE mutant (nucleotide sequence: SEQ ID NO: 20)) were arranged downstream from a promoter in this order as observed from the 5' side. The mutant 3'UTR reporter vector was transfected into a HEK293T cell together with a RBMS2 expression vector or an empty vector. 48 hours lapsed after the transfection, a luciferase activity was measured. The results are shown in Fig. 2.

[0186]

In a 3'UTR in IL-6 mRNA, there are a stem loop structure involved in the stabilization of mRNA and an AU-rich element (ARE) that is rich in AU. The stem loop structure is an element critical for the recognition by Regnase-1 (ZC3H12A) that is an RNase and the subsequent degradation. It is reported that ARID5a contributes to the stabilization of IL-6 mRNA by antagonizing the function of Regnase-1. However, as shown in Fig. 2C, RBMS2 increased the activity of a reporter (97-267 and 122-193) in which the stem loop structure was deleted in a 3'UTR.

[0187]

In IL-6 mRNA, there are two adjacent AREs that are close to each other. It is known that an ARE binding protein, e.g. TTP, is involved in the degradation of mRNA

through this area. As shown in Fig. 2C, when one of the ARE regions is deleted, the increase in the reporter activity caused by RBMS2 was not observed (Δ ARE1 and Δ ARE2). When the sequence for ARE was mutated (by substituting U by G), the increase in the reporter activity by RBMS2 was not observed, either (ARE mutant). From these results, it was suggested that RBMS2 was involved in the stabilization of mRNA through the ARE regions.

[0188]

Example 3: Comprehensive analysis of factor regulated by RBMS2

siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, SilencerTM Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into cells of MDA-MB-231 that was a breast cancer cell strain using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. After 48 hours, RNA was prepared from the cell, and sequencing was carried out with a next generation sequencer (Illumina, Inc., Next-seq). 427 genes were identified as genes each of which was mutated in such a manner the gene expression thereof was increased by two-fold or more or was decreased by two-fold or more by RBMS2 knockdown. 243 genes were extracted as genes in each of which an ARE sequence was contained in 3'UTR.

[0189]

Example 4: Gene Ontology analysis

A group of genes in each of which the gene expression was changed by two-fold or more or 1/2 or less by RBMS2 knockdown and an ARE was contained in 3'UTR was subjected to a gene ontology analysis using DAVID (<https://david.ncifcrf.gov/tools.jsp>). As a result, “cell growth” and “cell migration” were extracted as biological processes in each of which the p value was 5% or less and the FDR value was 10% or less. From the result, it was suggested that “cell growth”

and “cell migration” were regulated by RBMS2. Furthermore, as target genes of RBMS2, 11 genes capable of promoting cell growth (CSF2, IL6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL24, THBS1, MYC and TGFB2) and 9 types of genes capable of promoting cell migration (ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLA1 and CYR61) were identified. All of these genes are genes in each of which the gene expression was decreased by half or less by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0190]

Example 5: Analysis of influence of RBMS2 on cell growth

Example 5A: Analysis on surviving cells

siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer™ Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. After 48 hours, the amount of surviving cells was measured using RealTime-Glo™ MT Cell Viability Assay (Promega Corporation). The results are shown in Fig. 3A.

[0191]

As shown in Fig. 3A, the cell growth was inhibited by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0192]

Example 5B: Analysis of number of cells

MDA-MB-231 cells were seeded onto a 96-well plate and were then cultured overnight (16 hours), and then siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer™ Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into the cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. The time point immediately after the transfection of siRNA was defined as “time 0”, and the number of cells was counted every 24 hours thereafter. For the

counting of the number of cells, CellTiter 96(R) AQueous One Solution Cell Proliferation Assay (Promega Corporation) was used. The results are shown in Fig. 3B.

[0193]

As shown in Fig. 3B, the cell growth was inhibited by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0194]

Example 5C: Analysis of Akt pathway and STAT3 pathway

siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, SilencerTM Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. After 48 hours, the cells were stimulated with IL-1 β (20 ng/ml) for 30 minutes or 60 minutes. The cells were washed with PBS, and were then suspended in a lysis solution (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 1% NP40, 0.5% Sodium deoxycholate). An extracted protein (10 μ g) was separated by SDS-PAGE and was then transferred onto a PVDF membrane, and then western blotting was carried out. As primary antibodies, anti-Phospho-Akt (Ser473) (Cell Signaling Technology, #4060), anti-Akt (total) (Cell Signaling Technology, #4691), anti-Phospho-Stat3 (Tyr705) (Cell Signaling Technology, #9145), anti-STAT3 (total) (Santa Cruz, sc-482) and anti-Tubulin (Cell Signaling Technology, #2148) were used each at a dilution rate of x1,000. As a secondary antibody, Anti-Rabbit IgG, HRP-Linked F(ab')₂ Fragment Donkey (GE Healthcare, NA9340) was used at a dilution rate of x10,000. Emission of light was caused with an ECL reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, PierceTM ECL Western Blotting Substrate) and was then imaged with ImageQuant LAS4000mini (GE Healthcare). The results are shown in Fig. 3C.

[0195]

As shown in Fig. 3C, the signaling pathway associated with cell growth was inhibited by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0196]

Example 6: Analysis of influence of RBMS2 on cell migration ability

siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer™ Select Negative Control No. 1) were transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. After 48 hours, the cells were treated with trypsin to prepare a cell suspension. The cells were washed twice with a culture medium without serum (a serum-free DMEM culture medium). DMEM containing 800 µl of 10% serum was added into a 24-well plate, and then Transwell insert (Corning, #353097) was installed therein. The cells suspended in the serum-free DMEM culture medium were seeded onto the Transwell insert. After 16 hours, the cells were stained with crystal violet. The matter that a larger number of stained cells are detected indicates that cell migration ability is higher. The results are shown in Fig. 4.

[0197]

As shown in Fig. 4, the cell migration ability was inhibited by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0198]

Example 7: Analysis of influence of RBMS2 on cell infiltration ability

siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer™ Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. After 48 hours, the cells were treated with trypsin to prepare a cell suspension. The cells were washed twice with a culture medium without serum (a serum-free DMEM culture

medium). DMEM containing 800 µl of 10% serum was added into a 24-well plate, and then a matrigel invasion chamber (Corning, #354480) was installed therein. The cells suspended in the serum-free DMEM culture medium were seeded onto the matrigel invasion chamber. After 16 hours, the cells were stained with crystal violet. The matter that a larger number of stained cells are detected indicates that the cell infiltration ability is higher. The results are shown in Fig. 5.

[0199]

As shown in Fig. 5, the cell infiltration ability was inhibited by RBMS2 knockdown.

[0200]

Example 8: Analysis of metastasis-associated factor regulation ability of RBMS2

Example 8A

A reporter vector shown below, a Renilla luciferase expression vector and a RBMS2 expression vector or a control empty vector were transfected into HEK293T cells. After 48 hours, a luciferase assay was carried out using Dual-Glo Luciferase Assay System (Promega Corporation). The results are shown in Fig. 6.

[0201]

The reporter vector: a vector in which a 3'UTR (F3: refseqID NM_001178096.1 939 to 2233 (SEQ ID NO: 21), PLAU: refseqID NM_001145031.2 1731 to 2625 (SEQ ID NO: 22), HBEGF: refseqID NM_001945.2 903 to 2358 (SEQ ID NO: 23), THBS1: refseqID NM_003246.3 3693 to 7237 (SEQ ID NO: 24), CYR61: refseqID NM_001554.4 1371 to 2288 (SEQ ID NO: 25), ITGA6: refseqID NM_000210.3 3457 to 5842 (SEQ ID NO: 26), HSPA5: refseqID NM_005347.4 2227 to 3970 (SEQ ID NO: 27)), (EDIL3: refseqID NM_005711.4 1937 to 4772 (SEQ ID NO: 28), (CSF1: refseqID NM_000757.5 2079 to 4250 (SEQ ID NO: 29), (ITGB1:

refseqID NM_002211.3 2619 to 3880 (SEQ ID NO: 30) or (MMP1: refseqID NM_002421.3 1554 to 2082 (SEQ ID NO: 31) of a gene showing gene ontology that defines cell motion (i.e., a metastasis-related factor), among genes each showing the decrease in an expression amount/level when RBMS2 was knocked down, was arranged downstream from Firefly luciferase gene that can be expressed under the regulation of SV40 promoter.

[0202]

As shown in Fig. 6, the expression amount/level of the reporter vector carrying the 3'UTR of the metastasis-related factor was increased by the overexpression of RBMS2. From these results, it was suggested that RBMS2 stabilized mRNA of a metastasis-related factor through a 3'UTR.

[0203]

Example 8B

A reporter vector carrying a 3'UTR of F3 gene (Example 8A) or a reporter vector prepared by mutating all elements (6 elements) of an AU-rich element (AUUUA) in the 3'UTR in the above-mentioned vector and a FLAG-tagged RBMS2 expression vector were introduced into HEK293T cells. The cells were collected after 48 hours, and were then dissolved in 1 ml of RIP lysis buffer (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 100 mM KCl, 5 mM MgCl₂, 0.5% NP-40, 40 U/μl RNase inhibitor (Toyobo Co., Ltd.), Complete mini protease inhibitor cocktail (Roche) and 1 μM PMSF). The resultant solution was allowed to leave on ice for 15 minutes and was then centrifuged at 20,000xg for 5 minutes, and a supernatant was collected. A portion (50 μl) of the supernatant was stored as an input. The remainder of the supernatant was divided into two 450-μl portions, and then 2 μg of a normal mouse IgG and an anti-FLAG antibody (SIGMA, F1804) were added to the portions, respectively. Subsequently, 50 μl of Protein G

Dynabeads (Thermo Fisher Scientific) was added to each of the solutions, and the resultant solutions were allowed to react at 4°C for 2 hours. After the reaction, the beads were washed three times with a RIP lysis buffer. Each of the input and immunoprecipitated RNA was purified with ReliaPrep™ RNA Cell Miniprep System (Promega Corporation), and was then subjected to reverse transcription using a random primer. The contraction efficiency was determined as a value relative to the value of the input by quantitative PCR. The results are shown in Fig. 7.

[0204]

As shown in Fig. 7, it was found that RBMS2 bound to the 3'UTR of F3 gene and the binding amount/level therebetween was decreased when the AU-rich element was mutated. From these results, it was suggested that RBMS2 was bound to the 3'UTR of F3 gene through the AU-rich element.

[0205]

Example 9: Analysis of homology among RBMS family members

The homology among human RBMS1 (RefseqID; NP_058520.1), human RBMS2 (RefseqID; NP_002889.1) and human RBMS3 (RefseqID; NP_001003793.1) was analyzed using CLC sequence viewer. The results of the analysis are shown in Fig. 8.

[0206]

As shown in Fig. 8, in RBMS2, a RRM1 domain (i.e., a region laying between the 1st position and the 128th position from the N-terminal) that is critical for the binding to target RNA and aromatic amino acid residues (*phenylalanine, RBMS1; F107 and F110, RBMS2; F101 and F104, RBMS3; F106 and F109) in the RPM1 domain were highly conserved.

[0207]

Example 10: Analysis of expression of RBMS family

RNA was prepared from each of a HEK293T cell (a human embryonic kidney cell), a MCF7 cell (breast cancer), a MDA-MB-231 cell (breast cancer), an A549 cell (lung cancer), a HeLa cell (cervical cancer), a HepG2 cell (lung cancer), a U87 cell (brain tumor), a THP1 cell (monocytic leukemia), a U937 cell (monocytic leukemia), a Ramos cell (Burkitt's lymphoma, B-cell neoplasm), a Jurkat cell (acute T-cell leukemia), a RAW264.7 cell (a macrophage), a HH4-13 cell (a T cell), an A20 cell (a B cell, a B16 cell (melanoma), a 3T3 cell (a fibroblast), a 3T3L1 cell (a fibroblast) and a 10T1/2 cell (a mesenchymal stem cell), and was then reverse-transcribed using oligo-dT as a primer. The expression amount/level of human or murine RBMS1, 2 or 3 was measured by quantitative PCR using THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) SYBR qPCR Mix (Toyobo Co., Ltd.). The results are shown in Fig. 9. In Fig. 9, the expression amount/level of each of the genes was expressed by an expression amount/level relative to that of HPRT gene.

[0208]

The sequences for primers used in the PCR are as shown below.

Human HPRT (5'-CCTGGCGTCGTGATTAGTGA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 32) and 5'-CGAGCAAGACGTTCAAGTCCT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 33))

Human RBMS1 (5'-CACCACCAGGAGTTTCTGCC -3' (SEQ ID NO: 34) and 5'-CAGCAAGTCTCACCTCTCCTT -3' (SEQ ID NO: 35))

Human RBMS2 (5'-CATCTCTCCCTCAGCAGCAC-3' (SEQ ID NO: 36) and 5'-GCTGCTCTCCTCGACTGAAA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 37))

Human RBMS3 (5'-TCTCCAAACCAAGCAGTCCT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 38) and 5'-GGAGGCCTCGAATGTACAGG -3' (SEQ ID NO: 39))

Murine HPRT (5'-CTTCCTCCTCAGACCGCTTT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 40) and 5'-CATCATCGCTAATCACGACGC-3' (SEQ ID NO: 41))

Murine RBMS1 (5'-GAGATGATCTTCCCCAGCGG-3' (SEQ ID NO: 42) and 5'-GGACCAGAGACTGCTGCTTG-3' (SEQ ID NO: 43))

Murine RBMS2 (5'-TGGCCTAGGAGGGGTTAGAC-3' (SEQ ID NO: 44) and 5'-GCTGGATGCCACTTCTCAGT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 45))

Murine RBMS3 (5'-TGGACCACCCCATGTCAATG-3' (SEQ ID NO: 46) and 5'-TGAATCGTTCCTGCTGTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO: 47)).

[0209]

Example 11: Post-transcriptional regulation by RBMS family

A reporter vector shown below, a Renilla luciferase expression vector and a RBMS1, RBMS2 or RBMS3 expression vector or a control empty vector were transfected into HEK293T cells. After 48 hours, a luciferase assay was carried out using Dual-Glo Luciferase Assay System (Promega Corporation). The results are shown in Fig. 10.

[0210]

The reporter vector; a vector in which a 3'UTR of human IL-6 (RefseqID:NM_000600.4, nucleotide-755 to nucleotide-1023) (SEQ ID NO: 48) or a 3'UTR of human IL-8 (RefseqID; NM_000584.3, nucleotide-936 to nucleotide-1293 (SEQ ID NO: 49)) was arranged downstream from Firefly luciferase gene that can be expressed under the regulation of SV40 promoter.

[0211]

As shown in Fig. 10, the expression amount/level of the reporter vector carrying the 3'UTR of IL-6 or IL-8 was increased by the overexpression of RBMS.

From these results, it was suggested that RBMS1 and RBMS3 as well as RBMS2 stabilized mRNA through a 3'UTR.

[0212]

Example 12: Inhibition of growth of cancer by RBMS family

MDA-MB-231 cells were seeded onto a 96-well plate and were then cultured overnight (16 hours), and then siRNA for RBMS1 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11864), siRNA for RBMS2 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer(R) Select s11867) or control siRNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Silencer™ Select Negative Control No. 1) was transfected into the cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMax. The time point immediately after the transfection of siRNA was defined as “time 0”, and the number of cells was counted every 24 hours thereafter. For the counting of the number of cells, CellTiter 96(R) AQueous One Solution Cell Proliferation Assay (Promega Corporation) was used. The results are shown in Fig. 11.

[0213]

As shown in Fig. 11, the growth of cancer cells was inhibited by RBMS knockdown.

[0214]

Example 13: Inhibition of metastasis of cancer by RBMS family

Control or short hairpin RNA (shRNA) for RBMS2 was expressed in cells of murine melanoma cell strain B16 using a retrovirus to establish knockdown cells. Cells that were in a logarithmic growth phase were detached with trypsin/EDTA, were then washed twice with PBS, and were then suspended in a serum-free DMEM culture medium so that the concentration of the cells became 1×10^6 /ml. A liquid cell suspension containing 2×10^5 cells (200 μ l) was administered to a C57BL/6J mouse (8-

week-age, female) through a tail vein. After 3 weeks, the lung was excised, and the occurrence of metastasis was evaluated.

[0215]

The shRNA sequences are as follows.

Control shRNA; 5'-GCTACACAAATCAGCGATTT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 50),

RBMS2 shRNA; 5'-GGAAACCACCTTCAACCAACT-3' (SEQ ID NO: 51).

[0216]

The results are shown in Fig. 12. When B16 cells in each of which control shRNA was expressed were administered, two metastatic lesions in the lung were observed (one lesion is a black part indicated by an arrow in Fig. 12, and the other is not observed in the view field in Fig. 12 or occurs on the rear surface of the view field).

When RBMS2 knockdown B16 cells were administered, the occurrence of metastasis to the lung was not observed.

[0217]

Example 14: Search for factor capable of regulating expression of RBMS

IL-10 protein or TGF β protein was added to a culture medium of a Jurkat cell that was a human T cell strain (final concentration: IL-10 protein $\rightarrow$ 20 ng/mL, TGF β protein $\rightarrow$ 10 ng/mL). cDNA from the cell before the addition and 8 hours after the addition and 24 hours after the addition was prepared, and the expression amount/levels of RBMS2 mRNA and HPRT (control) mRNA were measured by quantitative PCR.

The results are shown in Fig. 13.

[0218]

As shown in Fig. 3, the expression amount/level of RBMS2 mRNA was decreased by the addition of IL-10 protein. This result demonstrated that IL-10 protein had an effect to inhibit the expression of RBMS2.

[0219]

Example 15: Analysis of binding site of RBMS on RNA

Binding sites of RBMS on RNA were analyzed by PAR-CLIP. The schematic illustration of PAR-CLIP is shown in Fig. 14. Concretely, the following procedures were carried out.

[0220]

Establishment of doxycycline-induced RBMS2-expressing cell

Human RBMS2 having a FLAG tag attached thereto was cloned into a pCLT-EFS-Pur vector, and was then transfected into HEK293T cells together with a pCAG-HIVgp vector and a pCMV-VSV-G-RSV-Rev vector to produce lentiviruses. MDA-MB-231 cells were infected with the lentiviruses thus produced for 24 hours, and were then cultured for 5 days in the presence of 1 µg/ml of puromycin.

[0221]

Immunoprecipitation

2×10^6 cells were seeded onto six 15-cm dishes and were then cultured overnight, then doxycycline (final concentration: 10 ng/ml) and 4-thiouridine (final concentration: 100 µM) were added to the cells, and the cells were cultured for 16 hours and were then irradiated with UV light having a wavelength of 365 nm at $150 \mu\text{J}/\text{cm}^2$ to cause the crosslinking of RNA and the protein. The cells were collected with a cell scraper, and were then suspended in a cell lysing solution to prepare a cell lysate. An anti-FLAG-tagged antibody (SIGMA; M2, 10 µg) and Protein A magnetic beads (Thermo Fisher Scientific K.K.) were added, and then the resultant solution was allowed to react at 4°C for 2 hours to cause immunoprecipitation.

[0222]

Extraction of RNA and addition of linker

A linker (sequence: 5'-UGGAAUUCUCGGGUGCCAAGG-3' (SEQ ID NO: 52)) was added to the immunoprecipitate (an RNA-(RBMS2 protein) complex) on the 3' side of the RNA using T4 RNA ligase (NEB), and then the 5' side of the RNA was radioisotope-labeled with [γ -32P] ATP. The resultant product was electrophorased on SDS-PAGE and was then transferred onto a nitrocellulose membrane, then the RNA/(RBMS2 protein) complex (about 55 to 80 kDa) was cleaved out, and then RNA was purified from the cleaved specimen. A linker (sequence: 5'-GUUCAGAGUUCUACAGUCCGACGAUC-3' (SEQ ID NO: 53)) was added to the 5' side of the purified RNA using T4 RNA ligase (NEB), then reverse transcription was carried out using the resultant RNA as a template and using a specific primer (sequence: 5'-CCTTGGCACCCGAGAATTCCA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 54)) to synthesize cDNA (Thermo Fisher Scientific K.K., SuperScript III).

[0223]

PCR

PCR was carried out using the cDNA as a template and using the following primers to perform the addition of an index.

RNA PCR Primer 1st

5'-G TTCAGAGTTCTACAGTCCGA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 55)

RNA PCR Primer, Index1 1st

5'-CCTTGGCACCCGAGAATTCCA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 56)

The addition of an index was carried out using a first-stage PCR product as a template and using the primers shown below, and a PCR product having about 200 bp was cleaved out and was then purified.

RNA PCR Primer

5'-AATGATACGGCGACCACCGAGATCTACACGTTTCAGAGTTCTACAGTCCGA-
3' (SEQ ID NO: 57)

RNA PCR Primer, Index1

5'-

CAAGCAGAAGACGGCATACGAGATCGTGATGTGACTGGAGTTCCTTGGCACC
CGAGAATTCCA-3' (SEQ ID NO: 58).

[0224]

Next generation sequencer

The concentration of the PCR product was adjusted to 10 pM, and was then sequenced using MiSeq (Illumina, Inc.). An adapter sequence was trimmed from the sequence information of Fastq file obtained by the next generation sequencing analysis using FaQCs, and was then mapped on human genome sequence (hg38) using Bowtie. The mapped sequence information was visualized using IGV.

[0225]

Results

As a representative example, the results in genome regions of IL-6, IL-8 (CXCL8) and CXCL1 are shown in Fig. 15. It was found that RBMS2 was bonded to the 3'UTR (particularly an AU-rich element) in each of the genes.

[0226]

Example 16: Expression of RBMS in highly malignant cancer

Data on GSE6883-GPL96 or GSE6883-GPL97 was obtained from GEO (Gene Expression Omnibus) database (the original literature: Liu et al. N Engl J Med 2007;356:217-26.), and the expression data on RBMS2 (probe ID; 205228_at) and RBMS1 (probe ID; 237860_at) were analyzed.

[0227]

The expression data of RBMS2 is shown in Fig. 16A, and the expression data of RBMS1 is shown in Fig. 16B. It was found that RBMS was highly expressed in highly malignant cancer (H: CD44⁺CD24⁻ cancer cell).

[0228]

Example 17: Analysis of mechanism of regulation of expression of RBMS

The mechanism of regulation of the expression of RBMS was analyzed. Concretely, the following procedures were carried out.

[0229]

The quantitative PCR primers used are as follows. In the examples mentioned below, the primers mentioned in this section were also used, unless otherwise stated.

KRAS primers

hKRAS-Fw: TGGTGAGGGAGATCCGACAA (SEQ ID NO: 59)

hKRAS-Rv: AGGCATCATCAACACCCAGA (SEQ ID NO: 60)

IL-6 primers

hIL6-Fw: CTCCAGGAGCCCAGCTATGA (SEQ ID NO: 61)

hIL6-Rv: GAGGTGAGTGGCTGTCTGTG (SEQ ID NO: 62)

HPRT primers

hHPRT-Fw: GCTGGCGTCGTGATTAGTGA (SEQ ID NO: 63)

hHPRT-Rv: CGAGCAAGACGTTTCAGTCCT (SEQ ID NO: 64)

CXCL1 primers

hCXCL1-Fw: TCACAGTGTGTGGTCAACAT (SEQ ID NO: 65)

hCXCL1-Rv: AGCCCCTTTGTTCTAAGCCA (SEQ ID NO: 66)

RBMS2 primers

hRBMS2-Fw: GTGATAGGCCAGGGGAGTAG (SEQ ID NO: 67)

hRBMS2-Rv: ACTCTGCTCCTATGCTGGTG (SEQ ID NO: 68).

[0230]

The siRNA molecules used are as follows. In the examples mentioned below, the siRNA molecules mentioned in this section were also used, unless otherwise stated.

siRNA for KRAS knockdown test (Qiagen K. K.)

siNega: AllStars Negative Control siRNA (SI03650318) Sequence is undisclosed.

siKRAS: Hs_KRAS_2 FlexiTube siRNA (Cat. No. SI03106824) Sequence is undisclosed.

siRNA for RBMS2 knockdown test (Thermo-Fisher Scientific)

Negative control (Thermo Fisher Scientific (Ambion), Silencer (registered trade name)

Select Negative Control No. 1 siRNA, product No.: 4390843) Sequence is undisclosed.

Human RBMS2-1 (Thermo Fisher Scientific (Ambion), Silencer (registered trade name)

Select, siRNA ID No. s11867) Sequence: UUUGCACAAAUUUCCUUGGT (SEQ

ID NO: 69).

[0231]

Quantitative PCR 1

RNA was purified from MCF-7 or MDA-MB-231 cells (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of RBMS2 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The results are shown in Fig. 17A.

[0232]

Western blotting

MCF-7 or MDA-MB-231 cells were suspended in a lysis buffer (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.5 m MEDTA, 1% Triton X-100, 0.5% sodium

deoxycholate, Complete mini protease inhibitor cocktail (Roche)), then the resultant suspension was allowed to leave on ice for 15 minutes and was then centrifugated (15,000 rpm, 4°C, 5 minutes), and then a supernatant was collected. A protein sample (20 µg) was electrophoresed with 10% SDS-PAGE and was then transferred onto a PVDF membrane. The membrane was blocked (Nacalai Tesque INC.; Blocking One) at room temperature for 1 hour, and was then reacted with a 2,000-fold-diluted RBMS2 antibody (a rabbit polyclonal, an autologously produced antibody) overnight. The resultant product was washed three times with TBST (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.05% Tween-20) for 10 minutes, and was then reacted with an HRP-labeled anti-rabbit IgG antibody at room temperature for 1 hour. Bands were visualized with an ECL reagent. The results are shown in Fig. 17B.

[0233]

Quantitative PCR 2

KRAS (a G13D mutant) was cloned into a pCSII-CMV-MCS-Venus vector. A pCSII-CMV-MCS-Venus empty vector or a pCSII-CMV-MCS-Venus-KRAS (G13D) vector was transfected together with a pCAG-HIVgp vector and a pCMV-VSV-G-RSV-Rev vector into HEK293T cells with polyethylenimine, and the resultant product was cultured for 48 hours to produce lentiviruses. MCF-7 cells were infected with a collected supernatant and were then cultured for 5 days, then RNA was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit) and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of RBMS2 and IL-6 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The results are shown in Fig. 17C.

[0234]

Quantitative PCR 3

siRNA negative control (siNeg) or siRNA for KRAS (siKRAS) (10 pmol) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMAX Transfection Reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific), and the cells were cultured for 48 hours. RNA was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit) and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of RBMS2, KRAS and IL-6 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The results are shown in Fig. 17D.

[0235]

Results

It was found that RBMS2 was expressed in a high expression amount/level in highly malignant cancer having a KRAS G13D mutation (MDA-MB-231) (Figs. 17A and 17B). It was also found that, when a KRAS G13D mutant was transfected into cells each having no KRAS G13D mutation (MCF-7), the expression amount/level of RBMS2 and the expression amount/level of a cancer promoting factor of which the expression can be regulated by RBMS2 (IL-6) were increased (Fig. 17C). It was also found that, when KRAS in cells each having a KRAS G13D mutant (MDA-MB-231) was inhibited, the expression amount/level of RBMS2 and the expression amount/level of a cancer promoting factor of which the expression can be regulated by RBMS2 (IL-6) were decreased (Fig. 17D). From these results, such a mechanism was suggested that the expression of RBMS2 was promoted by a KRAS G13D mutant and, as a result, mRNA for a cancer promoting factor such as IL-6 was stabilized and the expression amount/level of the cancer promoting factor was increased (Fig. 17E).

[0236]

Example 18: Relationship between expression of RBMS and prognosis

The expression of RBMS2 or RBMS1 in pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer or breast cancer was analyzed on the basis of Human protein atlas database (<http://www.proteinatlas.org>).

[0237]

The results are shown in Fig. 18. It was found that the prognosis of these types of cancer tended to be worsened when RBMS1 and RBMS2 were highly expressed.

[0238]

Example 19: Correlation between expression of RBMS and mutation of KRAS 1

RNA was purified from MCF-7 (breast cancer, KRAS; WT), MDA-MB-231 (breast cancer, KRAS; G13D), LoVo (colorectal cancer, KRAS; G13D) or Panc1 (pancreatic cancer, KRAS; G12V) (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of RBMS2 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT.

[0239]

The results are shown in Fig. 19. It was found that the expression amount/level of RBMS was increased in various KRAS mutant cells. From this result, it was suggested that the expression of RBMS2 was induced by a KRAS mutant.

[0240]

Example 20: Correlation between expression of RBMS and mutation of KRAS 2

The quantitative PCR primers used in this example for the first time were as follows. In the examples mentioned below, the primers mentioned in this section were also used, unless otherwise stated.

IL-8 primers

hIL8-Fw: ACCGGAAGGAACCATCTCAC (SEQ ID NO: 70)

hIL8-Rv: GGCAAAACTGCACCTTCACAC (SEQ ID NO: 71)

RBMS1 primers

hRBMS1-Fw: CCATGGCATAGAGAAGGAGAGG (SEQ ID NO: 72)

hRBMS1-Rv: TAGCAGCTGTAGTTGGGTCG (SEQ ID NO: 73).

[0241]

Each of KRAS and mutants thereof (G12D, G12S, G12V, G13D) was cloned into a pCLT-EFS-Pur vector. A pCLT-EFS-Pur empty vector, a pCLT-EFS-Pur -KRAS vector or a mutant vector thereof was transfected together with a pCAG-HIVgp vector and a pCMV-VSV-G-RSV-Rev vector into HEK293T cells with polyethylenimine, and the cells were cultured for 48 hours to produce lentiviruses. MCF-7 cells were infected with a collected supernatant, and were then cultured for 5 days in the presence of 1 µg/ml of puromycin. The cells were cultured in a culture medium containing 100 ng/ml or 1000 ng/ml of doxycycline for 72 hours, and then RNA was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit) and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of RBMS2, RBMS1, IL-8 and IL-6 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT.

[0242]

The results for RBMS2 are shown in Fig. 20A, the results for RBMS1 are shown in Fig. 20B, the results for IL-6 are shown in Fig. 20C, and the results for IL-8 are shown in Fig. 20D. From these results, it was suggested that the expression of RBMS2 and RBMS1 was induced by a KRAS mutant.

[0243]

Example 21: Stability of mRNA in KRAS mutant cells

Stability of mRNA in KRAS mutant cells was analyzed. Concretely, the following procedures were carried out.

[0244]

MCF-7 cells and MDA-MB-231 cells were stimulated with 20 ng/ml of human IL-1 β for 3 hours, then 5 μ g/ml of actinomycin D was added to the cells, and RNA each of after 1 hour and 2 hours was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit) and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of IL-6 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The amount of remaining RNA was calculated, wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without the addition of actinomycin D was defined as “100%”. The results are shown in Fig. 21A.

[0245]

Actinomycin D (5 μ g/ml) was added to MCF-7 cells and MDA-MB-231 cells, and then RNA each of after 1 hour and after 2 hours was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of IL-8 and CXCL1 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The amount of remaining RNA was calculated, wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without the addition of actinomycin D was defined as “100%”. The results are shown in Fig. 21A.

[0246]

Actinomycin D (5 µg/ml) was added to HepG2 cells (liver cancer, KRAS; WT), LoVo cells (colorectal cancer, KRAS; G13D) or HPAF-II cells (pancreatic cancer, KRAS; G13D), and then RNA each of after 1 hour and after 2 hours was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of IL-6, IL-8 and CXCL1 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The amount of remaining RNA was calculated, wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without the addition of actinomycin D was defined as “100%”. The results are shown in Fig. 21B.

[0247]

siRNA negative control (siNeg) or siRNA for KRAS (siKRAS) (10 pmol) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMAX Transfection Reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific), and the cells were cultured for 48 hours. Actinomycin D (5 µg/ml) was added, and then RNA each of after 1 hour and after 2 hours was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of IL-6, IL-8 and CXCL1 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The amount of remaining RNA was calculated, wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without the addition of actinomycin D was defined as “100%”. The results are shown in Fig. 21C.

[0248]

siRNA negative control (siNeg) or siRNA for RBMS2 (siRBMS2) (10 pmol) was transfected into MDA-MB-231 cells using Lipofectamine RNAiMAX Transfection

Reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific), and the cells were cultured for 48 hours. Actinomycin D (5 µg/ml) was added, and then RNA each of after 1 hour and after 2 hours was purified (Promega Corporation; ReliaPrep Cell mini prep kit), and was then reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; ReverTra Ace). The expression of IL-6, IL-8 and CXCL1 was analyzed using qPCR (Toyobo Co., Ltd.; THUNDERBIRD (registered trade name) qPCR Mix). The measured value was corrected by the expression amount/level of HPRT. The amount of remaining RNA was calculated, wherein the expression amount/level in a sample without the addition of actinomycin D was defined as “100%”. The results are shown in Fig. 21D.

[0249]

It was found that the stability of mRNA for each of IL-6, IL-8 and CXCL1 was improved in KRAS mutant cells (Figs. 21A and 21B). It was also found that the improved state was inhibited by inhibiting the KRAS mutant or RBMS2 (Figs. 21C and 21D). These results support the fact that there is such a mechanism that the expression of RBMS2 can be promoted by a KRAS G13D mutant and, as a result, mRNA for a cancer promoting factor such as IL-6 can be stabilized and the expression amount/level of the cancer promoting factor can be increased (Example 17, Fig. 17E).

[0250]

Example 22: RBMS promoter analysis

Each of a region lying about 4 kbp upstream from exon-2 (SEQ ID NO: 74), a region lying about 3 kbp upstream from exon-1 (SEQ ID NO: 75), a region lying about 2.5 kbp upstream from exon-2 (SEQ ID NO: 76) and a region lying about 1 kbp upstream from exon-1 in human RBMS2 gene (SEQ ID NO: 77) was cloned into a luciferase vector (pGL4. Promega Corporation). A vector containing an upstream region of RBMS1 gene and a Renilla luciferase vector (phRL-TK, Promega

Corporation) was transfected into HEK293T cells with polyethyleneimine, and the cells were then cultured for 48 hours. A luciferase activity was measured using Dual-Glo (registered trade name) Luciferase Assay System (Promega Corporation) and was corrected with Renilla luciferase.

[0251]

The results are shown in Fig. 22. It was found that a region critical for a transcriptional activity was contained in a region between about 4 kbp and about 2.5 kbp both upstream from exon-2 and a region between exon-1 and exon-2.

[CLAIMS]

1. A reagent for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor, comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region, a vector carrying the expression cassette and a cell harboring the vector.
2. The screening reagent according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette is at least one expression cassette selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, an expression cassette containing a RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and an expression cassette containing a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region.
3. A method for screening for an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor by employing at least one item selected from the group consisting of items (i) to (iii) as an index in the presence of a test substance:
 - (i) the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS gene expression regulation region;
 - (ii) the binding amount/level of RBMS to RNA containing an AU-rich element;
 and
 - (iii) the amount/level of mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof or the amount/level of a protein derived from the mRNA in a RBMS-overexpressing cell.
4. The screening method according to claim 3, wherein
 - the expression amount/level of a gene in the index (i) is at least one item selected from the group consisting of the expression amount/level of a gene of which

the expression can be regulated by a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and the expression amount/level of a gene of which the expression can be regulated by a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region, and

the RBMS in each of the indices (ii) and (iii) is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

5. The screening method according to claim 3 or 4, wherein, when the value of the index in the presence of a test substance is smaller than the value of the index in the absence of the test substance, the test substance is selected as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor.

6. The screening method according to any one of claims 3 to 5, wherein the AU-rich element is an AU-rich element derived from mRNA for at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAUI, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

7. The screening method according to any one of claims 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a1) to (c1):

(a1) bringing an expression system which contains an expression cassette containing a RBMS gene expression regulation region and a gene arranged in such a manner that the expression thereof can be regulated by the region into contact with a test substance;

(b1) measuring, as an expression amount/level of interest, the expression amount/level of the gene in the expression system that has been contacted with the test substance and then comparing the expression amount/level of interest with a control

expression amount/level that is the expression amount/level of the gene in an expression system that has not been contacted with the test substance; and

(c1) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the expression amount/level of interest is smaller than the control expression amount/level.

8. The screening method according to claim 7, wherein the expression cassette is at least one expression cassette selected from the group consisting of an expression cassette containing a RBMS1 gene expression regulation region, an expression cassette containing a RBMS2 gene expression regulation region and an expression cassette containing a RBMS3 gene expression regulation region.

9. The screening method according to claim 7 or 8, wherein the expression system is a cell.

10. The screening method according to any one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the gene is a reporter gene.

11. The screening method according to any one of claims 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a2) to (c2):

(a2) bringing RNA containing an AU-rich element into contact with RBMS in the presence of a test substance;

(b2) measuring the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the presence of the test substance as a binding amount/level of interest, and then comparing the binding amount/level of interest with a control binding amount/level that is the binding amount/level between the RNA and the RBMS which are contacted with each other in the absence of the test substance; and

(c2) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the binding amount/level of interest is smaller than the control binding amount/level.

12. The screening method according to claim 11, wherein the RBMS is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

13. The screening method according to any one of claims 3 to 6, wherein the method includes steps (a3) to (c3):

(a3) bringing a cell which contains mRNA containing an AU-rich element in a 3'-UTR thereof and in which RBMS is overexpressed into contact with a test substance;

(b3) measuring the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in the cell that has been contacted with the test substance as an amount/level of interest, and then comparing the amount/level of interest with a control amount/level that is the amount/level of the mRNA or a protein derived from the mRNA in a cell that is not contacted with the test substance; and

(c3) selecting the test substance as an active ingredient for an inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor when the amount/level of interest is smaller than the control amount/level.

14. The screening method according to claim 13, wherein the RBMS is at least one component selected from the group consisting of RBMS1, RBMS2 and RBMS3.

15. The screening method according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the mRNA contains an ORF of a reporter protein.

16. An inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor, comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS expression inhibitor and a RBMS function inhibitor.

17. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to claim 16, wherein

the RBMS expression inhibitor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 expression inhibitor, a RBMS2 expression inhibitor and a RBMS3 expression inhibitor; and

the RBMS function inhibitor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 function inhibitor, a RBMS2 function inhibitor and a RBMS3 function inhibitor.

18. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to claim 16 or 17, wherein the RBMS expression inhibitor contains at least one RBMS expression inhibitor selected from the group consisting of RBMS-specific siRNA, RBMS-specific miRNA, a RBMS-specific antisense nucleic acid, expression vectors for these components and IL-10.

19. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to any one of claims 16 to 18, wherein the cancer promoting factor of which the expression is to be inhibited is at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLA1, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

20. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to any one of claims 16 to 19, wherein the inhibitor is used as a preventing or treating agent for cancer.

21. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to claim 20, wherein the cancer to be prevented or treated is at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of (X) to (Z):

(X) at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer;

(Y) the cancer is cancer of a type of RAS gene mutation; and

(Z) the cancer is highly malignant cancer.

22. The inhibitor of the expression of a cancer promoting factor according to claim 21, wherein the RAS gene mutation is a KRAS gene mutation.

23. A diagnostic agent for cancer, comprising a RBMS gene expression product detecting agent.

24. The diagnostic agent for cancer according to claim 23, wherein the RBMS gene expression product detecting agent is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 gene expression product detecting agent, a RBMS2 gene expression product detecting agent and a RBMS3 gene expression product detecting agent.

25. The diagnostic agent according to claim 23 or 24, wherein a cancer promoting factor is at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAUI, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.

26. The diagnostic agent for cancer according to any one of claims 23 to 25, wherein the cancer to be diagnosed is at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of (X) to (Z):

(X) at least one type of cancer selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, bile duct cancer and breast cancer;

(Y) the cancer is cancer of a type of RAS gene mutation; and

(Z) the cancer is highly malignant cancer.

27. The diagnostic agent according to claim 26, wherein the RAS gene mutation is a KRAS gene mutation.

28. A method for detecting cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a1) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject; and

(b1) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a1) with a control expression amount/level of the RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject which does not suffer from cancer, wherein

(c1) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is larger than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has the cancer.

29. A method for determining the degree of progression of cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a2) measuring the expression amount/level of interest of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a subject suffering from the cancer; and

(b2) comparing the expression amount/level of interest measured in step (a2) with a control expression amount/level of a RBMS gene expression product in a sample collected from a control subject suffering from the cancer, wherein

(c2) the matter that the expression amount/level of interest is larger than the control expression amount/level is employed as an index for the determination that the subject has a higher degree of progression of the cancer than that of the control subject.

30. The method according to claim 28 or 29, wherein the RBMS gene expression product is at least one component selected from the group consisting of a RBMS1 gene expression product, a RBMS2 gene expression product and a RBMS3 gene expression product.

31. The method according to any one of claims 28 to 30, wherein the cancer can be developed or worsened by at least one component selected from the group consisting of CSF2, IL-6, ADAM10, ADM, CTGF, HBEGF, HILPDA, IL-24, THBS1, MYC, TGFB2, ADAM10, ITGA6, F3, PTP4A1, HBEGF, HSPA5, THBS1, PLAU, CYR61, ITGA6, EDIL3, CSF1, ITGB1 and MMP1.