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Altri autori (Persone)	MasciniMarco PalchettiIlaria
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Sommario/riassunto	Nucleic acids are the fundamental building blocks of life and are found in all living things. In recent years, their functions have been shown to extend beyond the Watson-Crick base pair recognition of complementary strands. Molecules (known as aptamers) consisting of 40-50 nucleotides have been isolated that are able to bind a broad range of molecules with high affinity and specificity. The molecules recognized by aptamers range from small organic molecules to proteins, cells and even intact viral particles. Catalytic DNA molecules called NAzymes (RNAzyme or DNAzyme) have also been shown to e