Retraction: Polymorphisms of the CYP1B1 Gene as Risk Factors for Human Renal Cell Cancer

The article titled, "Polymorphisms of the CYP1B1 Gene as Risk Factors for Human Renal Cell Cancer," which was published in the March 15, 2004, issue of Clinical Cancer Research (CCR; ref 1), is being retracted at the request of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, San Francisco (VA), and the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), the primary affiliations for several authors listed in the article.

In early 2017, representatives from the VA and UCSF sent a joint letter to the AACR Editorial office informing us of the results of a joint investigation into two articles: "CYP1B1 Gene Polymorphisms Have Higher risk for Endometrial Cancer, and Positive Correlations with Estrogen Receptor α and Estrogen Receptor β Expressions," which was published in Cancer Research (2), and the above-mentioned article, which was published in Clinical Cancer Research. According to the letter, the joint Investigation Committee on Scientific Misconduct "determined that Figures 1B in each of the above cited papers... have fabrication or falsification of data that constitutes Research Misconduct. The findings have been reviewed by the VA Office of Research Oversight (ORO) and in part by the UCSF Office of Research Integrity (ORI), who concur with the conclusions."

The letter provides further detail:

The two articles had some figures with the same panels used for both papers despite being experiments from two different cancers. The figures also have some panels repeated from and identical to an earlier paper studying a third type of cancer.

The Investigation Committee reviewed in detail the analytic methods and findings of the Inquiry Committee. It unanimously agreed that there were numerous similarities between the figures in question, including the location and shape of streak and spot artifacts, as well as band morphologies were noted. This was concluded by the Committee to support the allegation of data falsification or fabrication and research misconduct.

It was determined by the Inquiry Committee that several of the figures in question, alleged to be manipulated images from the same source rearranged and relabeled in the two publications, were first published in a third publication (3)...

It was also noted that although the 2002 article, for which Dr. Tanaka was the first author, did not include a representation of "Codon 453," which was apparently not present in the targeted population, the subsequent papers, which utilized the same population, included panels labeled "codon 453."

Overall, the committee concluded that there was clear evidence of intentional manipulation and misrepresentation of the data, even though the figures were meant only to be illustrative of genotyping results. The above figures contained evidence of intentional data fabrication or falsification, and that this constituted instances of research misconduct... Based on these conclusions, we and the Committee recommend that both Clinical Cancer Research and Cancer Research assess these articles for correction or retraction.

The matter was reviewed by members of the AACR Publications staff and CCR editors, who agree with the Investigation Committee's assessment. A copy of this retraction notice was sent to the last known email addresses for all 9 authors. Four authors (Yuichiro Tanaka, Suguru Yonezawa, Masayuki Nakagawa, and Rajvir Dahiya) consented to the retraction; the remaining 5 authors (Masahiro Sasaki, Steven T. Okino, Mitsuharu Nomoto, Seiichiro Fujimoto, and Noriaki Sakuragi) did not respond.
References


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