

## EDITORIAL EXPRESSION OF CONCERN



# Editorial Expression of Concern: HDAC2 phosphorylation-dependent Klf5 deacetylation and RAR $\alpha$ acetylation induced by RAR agonist switch the transcription regulatory programs of *p21* in VSMCs

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The Editors would like to alert the readers that concerns have been raised regarding the gels and blots in the published figures. Specifically:

- Fig. 1g top left image appears highly similar to Fig. 3i bottom image and Fig. 5c top image.
- Fig. 1g top right image appears highly similar to Fig. 3i top image and Fig. 5c bottom image.
- Fig. 1h Klf5 image appears highly similar to Fig. 3h Klf5 lanes 1 and 2.
- Fig. 5a left bottom Klf5 lanes 2 and 3 appear highly similar to Fig. 7f right bottom RAR $\alpha$ .
- Fig. 3d bottom RAR $\alpha$  image appears highly similar to flipped image of Fig. 3e bottom Klf5.
- Fig. 2a left HDAC2 and Klf5 bands appear highly similar to Fig. 3e HDAC2 lane 1 and Klf5 lane 1 respectively; Fig. 2a right HDAC2 and RAR $\alpha$  bands appear highly similar to Fig. 3d HDAC2 lane 1 and RAR $\alpha$  lane 1 respectively.

Dr. Jin-kun Wen, the corresponding author, has explained the issues listed above:

In the first 2 cases, the duplicated images represent results from the same experiment that were presented either as its entirety

(Fig. 5c) or as cropped parts. Dr. Wen apologized for not clearly clarifying the situation in the figure legends. In the third case, an error was introduced during the assembly of Fig. 1h which was meant to include cropped lanes 1 and 3 of Fig. 3h, but lanes 1 and 2 were mistakenly used. In the fourth case, Dr. Wen believed that the ratios of the bands in Figs. 5a and 7f are slightly different. Dr. Wen's view is that these duplications/errors do not compromise the conclusions of the paper. In the fifth case, the gel image for the Fig. 3e bottom Klf5 was an unintentional flipped duplication of the Fig. 3d bottom RAR $\alpha$  (which is correct), and Dr. Wen has provided a correct version of this panel. In the last case, the left two bands in Fig. 2a were cropped from the same source image used in Fig. 3e, and the right two bands in Fig. 2a were cropped from the same source image used in Fig. 3d, to show the relevant results. Klf5 lane in Fig. 2a is incorrect, and Dr. Wen has provided a correct version of this panel.

The Academic Committee of Hebei Medical University has reviewed the laboratory notebook and original data, and concluded that investigations revealed no evidence of scientific misconduct. Based on the available information, the Editors are issuing this Editorial Expression of Concern so that the readers are advised to interpret the presented data with caution.

Mei Han, Sui-bing Miao and Ya-nan Shu do not agree to this Editorial Expression of Concern. All other authors agree to this Editorial Expression of Concern.