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F L O R I D A

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Gerry Melino, MD, PhD
Editor-in-Chief
Cell Death and Differentiation

Re: “IKK α -mediated biogenesis of miR-196a through interaction with Drosha regulates the sensitivity of cancer cells to radiotherapy” by Fang et al. *Cell Death Differ.* 2016 Sep 1;23(9):1471-82. doi: 10.1038/cdd.2016.32. Epub 2016 Apr 8.

Dear Dr. Gerry Melino,

We sincerely thank you very much for publication of our paper entitled “IKK α -mediated biogenesis of miR-196a through interaction with Drosha regulates the sensitivity of cancer cells to radiotherapy” in *Cell Death Differ.* [2016 Sep 1;23(9):1471-82. doi: 10.1038/cdd.2016.32. Epub 2016 Apr 8]. Last Friday I received an anonymous email pointing out some potential problems with some figures of this paper. I immediately contacted the authors and started an investigation. Fig. 3d and 3e were the converted pictures of the FITC-RNA gel photos. These figures were contributed by Dr. Xing Fang. He said he modified these two figures when the FITC-RNA gel photos were converted into black and white pictures, and claimed the original FITC-RNA gel photos were lost. Fig. 5a, 5c, and 7c were contributed by Dr. Xueping Feng. She checked the original data and found that Fig. 5a and 5c were indeed accidentally mixed. Fig. 7c is the microscope photos of the in situ hybridization in paraffin-embedded human NPC tissue sections. Dr. Feng said she did not modify these pictures. It is surprising for Dr. Feng and us that the pictures shown in Fig. 7c contains some similar cells, as we did these experiments on the slides of 116 NPC samples, and there were so many (hundreds of) representative photos can be used. We tried to find the slides and the areas where the pictures of Fig. 7c were taken, but did not succeed.

At this stage, I have no reason to believe that any of my former co-workers engaged in fraudulent behavior. Nonetheless, there appear to be problems and because we are unable to provide some of the original data that was used to create the photos in these figures, I cannot defend with absolute certainty the conclusions drawn from them. The experiments must be repeated before they are suitable for inclusion in the scientific literature. Therefore, I would like

to publish a retraction of our current paper. I apologize sincerely for the trouble this has caused.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jun-Li Luo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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