

Retraction of S-K. Kang et al., Articles in *ARS*

Abstract

For the reasons contained in the full text of this announcement, the following articles are being officially retracted by *ARS*:

- Choi JI, Jee MK, Im YB, and Kang SK. Novel GSK-3b inhibitors and CBM-1078 guide hATSCs' deaging via Oct4 and b-catenin activation. *Antioxid Redox Signal*. 2012 May 8. [Epub ahead of print]; DOI: 10.1089/ars.2011.4422.
- Im YB, Jee MK, Jung JS, Choi JI, Jang JH, and Kang SK. miR23b ameliorates neuropathic pain in spinal cord by silencing NADPH oxidase 4. *Antioxid Redox Signal* 2012;16:1046–1060.
- Jang JH, Jung JS, Choi JI, and Kang SK. Nuclear Ago2/HSP60 contributes to broad spectrum of hATSCs function via Oct4 regulation. *Antioxid Redox Signal* 2012a;16:383–399.
- Jang JH, Jung JS, Im YB, Kang KS, Choi JI, and Kang SK. Crucial role of nuclear Ago2 for hUCB-MSCs differentiation and self-renewal via stemness control. *Antioxid Redox Signal* 2012b;16:95–111.

ON MAY 8, 2012, the Editor-in-Chief of *Antioxidants and Redox Signaling (ARS)* was alerted by an anonymous *ARS* reader about possible “evidence [of] fabrications,” accompanied by an attachment highlighting allegedly fabricated data published in *ARS* from the laboratory of Dr. Soo-Kyung Kang (Im et al, 2012 and Jang et al, 2012a). Review of the submitted illustrations led to the conclusion that the allegations were serious. Dr. Kang was contacted, and a quick response was requested. The author cooperated, accepting problems in the quality of data in these two articles, but claimed error rather than fabrication. Dr. Kang apologized for the lack of adequate oversight and sought retraction of both works, and each were retracted on May 9, 2012.

As the Editor of *ARS* was reviewing these articles and related submissions by Dr. Soo-Kyung Kang, it was found that one manuscript (which was still undergoing peer review and was unpublished) contained data which, in the author's response, were “immature” and “uninspected.” On May 17, 2012, this submission was promptly withdrawn from further consideration at the author's request.

In addition, two other articles, (Choi et al, 2012 and Jang et al, 2012b) by the same corresponding author were also found to suffer from data of questionable quality. In these two

instances, the author contested some of the allegations and requested permission to redo some experiments to improve the quality of data in these accepted papers. However, because *ARS* does not allow changing data to accepted manuscripts (besides minor corrections), and in consideration of the overall situation, both of these papers were also retracted by the Journal on May 17, 2012.

It is beyond the scope of *ARS* to investigate the matter at the institutional level in order to address the issue of “fabrication” versus “error.” The Editor of *ARS* brought the entire matter to the attention of the appropriate Dean responsible for Research Ethics at the Seoul National University, and requested an investigation. Dean Lee promptly wrote back saying that they will conduct an investigation and would inform *ARS* of the outcome. Whether error or fabrication, we are convinced that the published works rested on questionable data quality. To protect *ARS* reader interest, these works had to be retracted in their entirety because it was assessed that the inaccurate data sets undermined the entire work.

The authors apologize to the scientific community for these unfortunate circumstances.

ARS remains committed to the highest standards of scientific publishing.