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• LETTERS@WJGNET.COM •

Plagiarized and inaccurate papers in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

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To the Editor:

I was astonished to find this paper [Dong ML, Ding XZ, Collin P, Adrian TE. Red oil A5 inhibits proliferation and induces apoptosis in pancreatic cancer cells. *World J Gastroenterol* 2004; **10**(1): 105-111] published in your journal. This has been done without my knowledge or the other coauthor, Dr. Ding. There are numerous errors. These include (1) the exclusion of an important collaborating contributor; (2) the appearance that the work was carried out in China, when it was actually carried out at Northwestern University in Chicago; (3) an incorrect name for the compound being used; (4) an incorrect company name where the compound originated from. The following are the correct information. The authors list should be: Dong ML^[1], Ding XZ^[1], Collin P^[2], Adrian TE^[1]. The title should have been: CR-A5 inhibits proliferation and induces apoptosis in pancreatic cancer cells (the term oil A5 is meaningless; the product is called CR-A5). The address where the work was carried out was: ¹"Department of Surgery and Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center, Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL" and ²"Coastside Research, Stonington, Maine". The funding sources that should have been acknowledged were: The American Institute of Cancer Research, the RAPID Program of the RAPID Program of the Chemoprevention Branch of the National Cancer Institute, the Michael Rolfe Foundation and the Maine Technology Institute. Dr. Dong did carry out this work in my laboratory with the help of others, however, we never discussed where the work would be published and I certainly did not sanction its publication in your journal. I consider what Dr. Dong has done to be dishonest. Most journals require the signature of all authors before a paper can be

accepted for publication, this would be a good policy for the World Journal of Gastroenterology to adopt. More seriously, regarding Dr. Dong, I have now found another paper that he has published in your journal [Dong ML, Zhu YC, Hopkins JV. Oil A induces apoptosis of pancreatic cancer cells via caspase activation, redistribution of cell cycle and GADD expression. *World J Gastroenterol* 2003; **(9)**: 2745-2750]. Again this paper was published without my knowledge. The other authors are unknown to me and the name John V. Hopkins appears to have been fabricated. The contents of this paper have been almost entirely plagiarized from a previous publication from a Medical Oncologist, Dr. Xin-Quan Li who worked in my laboratory and Xian-Zhong Ding in the laboratory (Li X, Ding XZ, Adrian TE. Arsenic trioxide induces apoptosis in pancreatic cancer cells via changes in cell cycle, caspase activation, and GADD expression. *Pancreas* 27: 174-179, 2003). More disturbingly, at least some of the data have clearly been fabricated. The data in Figure 5 of the *World Journal of Gastroenterology* paper have been entirely lifted from the arsenic trioxide data in Figures 6 and 7 in the Pancreas paper. Please find the enclosed MS Powerpoint file where I have indicated the stolen data in red. Furthermore, careful perusal of the data in Figures 3 and 7 has been assembled in the computer by cutting and pasting sections from different gels. Since some of the data have clearly been fabricated this sheds doubt on all of the other findings in the manuscript. I never saw the raw data for most of these experiments and doubt that they were ever performed. I request that this paper is immediately retracted from the journal with an explanation published. I am sure you will want to do this for the integrity of the journal. An internal committee will be set up at Northwestern University to investigate this matter. I will attempt to contact the Dean of Wenzhou Medical College to inform him of this situation with one of his faculty. Since my NIH grant number was also copied onto the WJG paper, I am informing the NIH of this matter. Please let me know if I should inform your editorial board of what has happened. Finally, as you have requested, I state that the contents of this letter represent my viewpoints rather than those of the journal.

Apology to Dr. Thomas E. Adrian

After we received the letter of Dr Thomas E. Adrian, Dr Mi-Lian Dong wrote a letter for Dr Thomas E. Adrian and the following is the statement from Dr Mi-Lian Dong (the letter was provided by Dr. Thomas E. Adrian). Statement from Dr Mi-Lian Dong for Dr Thomas E. Adrian. From: Mi-Lian Dong (mdong2@hotmail.com). Sent: Monday, June 28, 2004 8:54 AM. To: tadrian@northwestern.edu. Subject: Dear Dr. Thomas Adrian, I don't know how to start this letter, but I have to face it. I can imagine your anger and your disappointment for my unacceptable behavior. I feel very sorry and apologize for what stupid things I did. When I was in Chicago, my former supervisor-Dr. White from Lutheran General Hospital, a very nice gentleman, took care of me and introduced me to your lab. In your Lab, you and Dr. Ding trained me and I learned a lots new stuff, some I never heard before as a clinician in China. I believe I worked very hard and did my best in your lab to repay your generous help. I never forget those wonderful days. But now, I destroyed all those wonderful memories. Dr. Thomas Adrian, I already sent a letter to the journal to ask them to remove that article. Such stupid things never happened in my 40 years life. I cannot sleep well and cannot focus my daily work as a busy doctor. I took a few days off. I believe I got punishment from this, but I accept it. It is unforgettable lesson for my future life. But now, besides sorry and regret, I really don't know what else I can do. Again, I apologize for what I did. Sincerely, Mi-Lian Dong.

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