



# Expressions of Concern

**Update to Expression of Concern. Kathrin Maedler, Desiree M. Schumann, Nadine Sauter, Helga Ellingsgaard, Domenico Bosco, Reto Baertschiger, Yoichiro Iwakura, José Oberholzer, Claes B. Wollheim, Benoit R. Gauthier, and Marc Y. Donath. Low Concentration of Interleukin-1 $\beta$  Induces FLICE-Inhibitory Protein-Mediated  $\beta$ -Cell Proliferation in Human Pancreatic Islets. *Diabetes* 2006;55:2713-2722. DOI:10.2337/db05-1430. PMID: 17003335**

American Diabetes Association

<https://doi.org/10.2337/db18-ec2018b>

On the basis of the recommendation of the American Diabetes Association's Panel on Ethical Scientific Programs (ESP), the American Diabetes Association, the publisher of *Diabetes*, is issuing this update to a previously published expression of concern for the article cited above (1).

The expression of concern was issued on 21 July 2016 to inform readers that images from the article by Maedler et al. (1) were potentially republished in a 2009 *PLoS One* article (2) and a 2011 *Journal of Biological Chemistry (JBC)* paper (3). Kathrin Maedler is the first author on this article and is the senior/corresponding author on the *PLoS One* and *JBC* papers. As noted in the expression of concern, the *PLoS One* article was amended with a correction in May 2015 to replace the figure in question (4), and the *JBC* article was retracted in November 2015 (5).

In February 2015, the University of Bremen initiated an investigation into allegations of image duplication in articles authored by Dr. Maedler. In October 2016, the University released a summary of the investigation's findings, which is publicly accessible on the University's website (6). The University's report, however, has not allayed the concerns of the American Diabetes Association's ESP regarding the reliability of the data presented in the article, as further described below.

Since the publication of the original expression of concern and the statement by the University of Bremen, the American Diabetes Association has learned of another instance of potential image reuse and duplication involving this article. This instance involves the use of the same source file to create images in multiple articles. The source image can be accessed by copying the underlying file of the left "Tubulin" panel of Fig. 1E in the paper-in-press version of the 2011 *JBC* paper by Ardestani et al. (3), which was published on 10 March 2011 and is available at <http://www.jbc.org/content/early/2011/03/10/jbc.M110.210526.full.pdf>.

The American Diabetes Association is concerned that the source file used to create the images in the 2011 *JBC* paper was previously used to create images in this article, as well as another 2006 *Diabetes* article (*Diabetes* 55:2455-2462) (7) by the same laboratory.

In this article, the "Actin 42 kDA" strip of Fig. 3B appears to derive from lanes 4-9 of the source file used to create the images in the 2011 *JBC* paper, with contrast and size adjustments. In *Diabetes* 55:2455-2462, the "Actin, 96 h" strip in Fig. 3D appears to derive from lanes 6-11 of the same source file, with horizontal rotation and contrast and size adjustments. As such, lanes 3-6 of the "Actin 42 kDA" strip of Fig. 3B of this article and lanes 3-6 of the "Actin, 96 h" strip in Fig. 3D of *Diabetes* 55:2455-2462, with horizontal rotation and contrast and size adjustments, appear to be duplicates.

The American Diabetes Association contacted Kathrin Maedler and corresponding author Marc Y. Donath to report these concerns and to request the original source files for review, but the authors explained that they no longer have access to the original source materials for these 2006 reports. As such, the ESP remains concerned that Fig. 3B of this article and Fig. 3D of *Diabetes* 55:2455-2462 are related. The Panel has contacted the University of Zurich to request an institutional investigation of these recently reported issues, and *Diabetes* will make a final decision on the publication status of this article

after the journal obtains more information on the reliability of the data and conclusions presented in the article.

*Diabetes* is a member journal of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (publicationethics.org). The ESP refers to COPE's guidelines and best practices when reviewing potential violations of the journal's publication policies.

## References

1. Maedler K, Schumann DM, Sauter N, et al. Low concentration of interleukin-1 $\beta$  induces FLICE-inhibitory protein-mediated  $\beta$ -cell proliferation in human pancreatic islets [published expression of concern appears in *Diabetes* 2016;65:2462]. *Diabetes* 2006;55:2713–2722. <https://doi.org/10.2337/db05-1430>
2. Schulthess FT, Katz S, Ardestani A, et al. Deletion of the mitochondrial flavoprotein apoptosis inducing factor (AIF) induces beta-cell apoptosis and impairs beta-cell mass [published correction appears in *PLoS One* 215; 10:e0117766]. *PLoS One* 2009;4:e4394. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0004394>
3. Ardestani A, Sauter NS, Paroni F, et al. Neutralizing IL-1 $\beta$  induces  $\beta$ -cell survival by maintaining PDX1 protein nuclear localization [PAP version], 10 March 2011. *J Biol Chem*. Available from <http://www.jbc.org/content/early/2011/03/10/jbc.M110.210526.full.pdf>
4. Notice of correction of "Deletion of the mitochondrial flavoprotein apoptosis inducing factor (AIF) induces beta-cell apoptosis and impairs beta-cell mass." *PLoS One* 2009;4:e4394. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0117766>
5. Notice of retraction of "Neutralizing interleukin-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ) induces  $\beta$ -cell survival by maintaining PDX1 protein nuclear localization" [retraction of: Ardestani A, Sauter NS, Paroni F, et al. In: *J Biol Chem* 2011;286:17144–17155]. *J Biol Chem* 2015;290:27532. <https://doi.org/10.1074/jbc.A110.210526>
6. University of Bremen. Translation of the Rector's statement about the results of the investigation of the Committee for the Investigation of Allegations of Scientific Misconduct of the University of Bremen concerning allegations against Dr. Kathrin Mädler [Internet], 2016. Available from [www.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/sites/referate/referat06/OfficialStatement\\_Rector.pdf](http://www.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/sites/referate/referat06/OfficialStatement_Rector.pdf). Accessed 13 March 2017
7. Maedler K, Schumann DM, Schulthess F, et al. Aging correlates with decreased  $\beta$ -cell proliferative capacity and enhanced sensitivity to apoptosis: a potential role for Fas and pancreatic duodenal homeobox-1 [published expression of concern appears in *Diabetes* 2018;67:2478–2479]. *Diabetes* 2006;55:2455–2462. <https://doi.org/10.2337/db05-1586>