Expression of Concern: Central Role for Adipocyte Na,K-ATPase Oxidant Amplification Loop in the Pathogenesis of Experimental Uremic Cardiomyopathy


Regarding the above article, the editors of the Journal of the American Society of Nephrology (JASN) are issuing an “Expression of Concern”. Through image evaluation tools, following receipt of an anonymous e-mail from a reader, potential image manipulation was detected in Supplemental Figure 8. Additionally, the fundamental validity of this study is uncertain, given several recently retracted articles authored by the same author group were cited as providing critical background information for the studies reported in the above referenced JASN article.

The specific concerns are as follows:

1. Supplemental Figure 8, added in the first revision of the paper to address central criticisms of two reviewers, has possible evidence of image manipulation, with probable duplication of bands. The experiment depicted in these studies is considered a critical piece of evidence for the overall validity of the studies. The image manipulation is quite extensive, not just cosmetic, and would be difficult to justify.

2. The manuscript cites and relies heavily on foundational scientific work in publications that have been retracted. The studies in question were retracted by highly reputable journals, largely based on substantial evidence of image manipulation. The referenced manuscripts are citations 2, 21, and 31. Additionally, image duplication from reference 1, Figure 1A, appeared in a (now) retracted paper from the author group (PMID: 34576342). The retraction of these studies calls into question the validity of the model and some of the assumptions made in this report.