

Japan scientist to retract one stem cell paper

May 29 2014



Haruko Obokata, a researcher at Japan's Riken Institute, speaks at a press conference in Osaka on April 9, 2014

A Japanese stem cell scientist, under pressure over inconsistencies in her groundbreaking research, has agreed to retract one of the two papers published in the respected journal *Nature*, reports said Thursday.

Haruko Obokata, 30, was feted after unveiling research that appeared to show a straightforward way to re-programme adult cells to become a kind of stem cell.

Stem cells are precursors that are capable of developing into any other cell in the human body, and a readily manufacturable supply of them could one day help meet a need for transplant tissues, or even whole organs.

But within weeks of her paper on so-called Stimulus-Triggered Acquisition of Pluripotency (STAP) cells being published, questions began to emerge, with fellow scientists saying they could not replicate her results.

Riken, the respected research institute that sponsored the study, has urged her to withdraw her two papers, after concluding that she fabricated at least some of the data.

Obokata has agreed with her co-authors to a partial retraction, saying: "I don't oppose withdrawing one of the" papers, according to the Yomiuri Shimbun, Kyodo News and other media.

But her lawyer said that she won't withdraw the main paper, and insists she successfully created STAP cells on several occasions.

The paper to be withdrawn noted the versatility of the cells, while the other paper summed up the [cells'](#) characteristics and method of making them.

Immediate confirmation of the news reports were not available.

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Citation: Japan scientist to retract one stem cell paper (2014, May 29) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-05-japan-scientist-retract-stem-cell.html>

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