

Retraction: CtBP2 is an independent prognostic marker that promotes GLI1 induced epithelialmesenchymal transition in hepatocellular carcinoma

Xin Zheng^{1,*}, Tao Song^{1,*}, Changwei Dou¹, Yuli Jia¹ and Qingguang Liu¹

¹Department of Hepatobiliary Surgery, the First Affiliated Hospital of Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710061, China

*These authors have contributed equally to this work

Published: April 24, 2026

Copyright: © 2026 Zheng et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

This article has been retracted: An image forensics analysis identified several instances of image duplication within the main figures, including the reuse of the authors' own figures and overlaps with unrelated papers from different institutions. The key findings are as follows:

- Figure 3A: The western blot for CtBP2 is a duplicate of the MMP7 blot in Figure 5A of an earlier article of the same group [1].
- Figure 3D: The western blot for N-cadherin duplicates the Figure 4D Fibronectin blot and was reused in Figure 3B of 2015 article of the same group [2].
- Figure 4B: The western blot for CtBP2 was duplicated as SNAI1 in Figure 4B of article [3] and as BCL3 in Figure 5B of article [4].
- Figure 6B: The blot Src siRNAs/Fibronectin was duplicated as the GLI1 blot in Figure 1C of article [2]. Additionally, the Fibronectin blot in Figure 6B (SNAI siRNA) appears as the PTCH1 blot in Figure 1C of article [2].
- Figure 7A: The image of three mice in the Hah7/Vector group appeared in Figure 9A of the Hep3B-Ftx siRNA group in article [5], which was recently retracted.
- Figure 8: IHC images for Hah7/Vector/N-cadherin and Huh7/CtBP2/CtBP2 were found as BAX-stained IHC images in Figure 7C of article [2].

As a result of these findings, the Editorial decision was made to retract this paper. Oncotarget has reached out to all authors multiple times to confirm this retraction but has received no response.

Original article: Oncotarget. 2015; 6:3752–3769. <https://doi.org/10.18632/oncotarget.2915>

REFERENCES

1. Tu K, Dou C, Zheng X, Li C, Yang W, Yao Y, Liu Q. Fibulin-5 inhibits hepatocellular carcinoma cell migration and invasion by down-regulating matrix metalloproteinase-7 expression. *BMC Cancer*. 2014; 14:938. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2407-14-938>. [PubMed]. Retraction in: *BMC Cancer*. 2025; 25:1867. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12885-025-15414-z>. [PubMed]
2. Gai X, Tu K, Li C, Lu Z, Roberts LR, Zheng X. Histone acetyltransferase PCAF accelerates apoptosis by repressing a GLI1/BCL2/BAX axis in hepatocellular carcinoma. *Cell Death Dis*. 2015; 6:e1712. <https://doi.org/10.1038/cddis.2015.76>. [PubMed]
3. Bai Z, Sun J, Wang X, Wang H, Pei H, Zhang Z. MicroRNA-153 is a prognostic marker and inhibits cell migration and invasion by targeting SNAI1 in human pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma. *Oncol Rep*. 2015; 34:595–602. <https://doi.org/10.3892/or.2015.4051>. [PubMed]. Retraction in: *Oncol Rep*. 2023; 49:7. <https://doi.org/10.3892/or.2022.8444>. [PubMed]
4. Wang H, Xiong M, Hu Y, Sun Y, Ma Q. MicroRNA-19b inhibits proliferation of gastric cancer cells by targeting B-cell CLL/lymphoma 3. *Oncol Rep*. 2016; 36:2079–86. <https://doi.org/10.3892/or.2016.5029>. [PubMed]. Retraction in: *Oncol Rep*. 2023; 49:104. <https://doi.org/10.3892/or.2023.8541>. [PubMed]
5. Liu Z, Dou C, Yao B, Xu M, Ding L, Wang Y, Jia Y, Li Q, Zhang H, Tu K, Song T, Liu Q. Ftx non coding RNA-derived miR-545 promotes cell proliferation by targeting RIG-I in hepatocellular carcinoma. *Oncotarget*. 2016; 7:25350–65. <https://doi.org/10.18632/oncotarget.8129>. [PubMed]. Retraction in: *Oncotarget*. 2025; 16:102. <https://doi.org/10.18632/oncotarget.28695>. [PubMed]