

Loss of ^{123}I -MIBG Uptake by the Heart in Parkinson's Disease: Assessment of Cardiac Sympathetic Denervation and Diagnostic Value

TO THE EDITOR: I read with interest the article by Satoh et al. (1), which was published in the March 1999 issue of the *JNM*. Unfortunately, the content of this article overlaps substantially with another article (titled differently) published in 1997 in the journal *Nippon Rinsho* (2). Using the same data, the same results, and the same figures as those included in the article that appeared in *Nippon Rinsho*, in the 1999 *JNM* article, the authors reached nearly equivalent conclusions. Is this sort of secondary publication acceptable (3)?

Second, authorship credit should reflect substantial contributions to the study (3). Although the number of authors of the Japanese version (2) is 3, the English version (1) appears to have been coauthored by 6 persons. I would like to know on what basis these additional coauthors were given credit for the English version.

Third, in Figure 2 of both articles, the name of the vertical axis on the bar chart of the wash-out rate differed between the Japanese and English versions. In the Japanese version, it was "WR" (wash-out rate), whereas in English version, it was "H/M". Which is correct?

Fourth, early images were obtained in 15 min after injection of MIBG in the English version, though in the Japanese version, the time frame was 30 min. Which is correct?

Although the third and fourth questions are minor problems, these also focus on the quality and reliability of this study.

REFERENCES

1. Satoh A, Serita T, Seto M, et al. Loss of ^{123}I -MIBG uptake by the heart in Parkinson's disease: assessment of cardiac sympathetic denervation and diagnostic value. *J Nucl Med*. 1999;40:371-375.
2. Satoh A, Serita T, Tujihata M. Total defect of metaiodobenzylguanidine imaging on heart in Parkinson's disease: assessment of cardiac sympathetic denervation. *Nippon Rinsho*. 1997;55:202-206.
3. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. *Ann Intern Med*. 1997;126:36-47.

Masahiro Ohmura
National Cardiovascular Center
Osaka, Japan

REPLY: The *Journal of Nuclear Medicine (JNM)* thanks Dr. Ohmura for his keen eye in calling to our attention the similarity of 2 articles published by Satoh et al. (1,2).

As stated in the Information for Authors printed quarterly in the journal (and available on line at http://www.snm.org/about/jnm_authors.html and through fax on demand at 888-398-7662 or 703-336-5573, document number 501), the *JNM* follows the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals* (3). It is not the policy of the *JNM* to reprint previously published articles. In the *JNM's* transfer of copyright agreement, the text of which is also included in the Information for Authors, the authors attest to the fact that "the material submitted to *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* is new, original, and has not been submitted to another publication for concurrent consideration." To further clarify the *JNM's* position on secondary publication, we have updated the Information for Authors to include the additional

phrase: "... likewise, this manuscript has not been published elsewhere either in part or in its entirety." A printed copy of the revised statement can be found in the June 2000 issue of the *JNM* (4).

The first article was published in *Nippon Rinsho* in January 1997 (1). The final version of the *JNM* article (2) was submitted December 8, 1997, and published in March 1999. Clearly, the authors should have notified the *JNM* Editor in Chief of the publication of the first article. Not doing so meant that the copyright transfer agreement signed by all authors on November 26, 1997, was not accurate, in that the work had been previously published.

The substantial overlap in the scientific matter presented in the articles noted by Dr. Ohmura warrants careful attention. Because the first article was published in Japanese, it was only possible to compare the abstracts of both articles on MEDLINE. Although, the *JNM* article included 24 control subjects in addition to the original 35 patients in the *Nippon Rinsho* article, Dr. Ohmura cites "nearly equivalent conclusions." Also, no mention is made in the *JNM* article that the results were previously published: a common practice when initially small studies are continued. Although there is no acknowledgment of the original article, the *JNM* article does appear to be a secondary publication rather than new and original research.

Regarding the acceptability of secondary publication, the *Uniform Requirements* (3) do outline procedures for acceptable secondary publication. They are as follows:

"Secondary publication in the same or another language, especially in other countries, is justifiable, and can be beneficial, provided ALL (emphasis added) of the following conditions are met.

1. The authors have received approval from the editors of both journals; the editor concerned with the secondary publication must have a photocopy, reprint, or manuscript of the primary version.
2. The priority of the primary publication is respected by a publication interval of at least one week (unless specifically negotiated otherwise by both editors).
3. The paper for secondary publication is intended for a different group of readers; an abbreviated version could be sufficient.
4. The secondary version faithfully reflects the data and interpretations of the primary version.
5. The footnote on the title page of the secondary version informs readers, peers, and documenting agencies that the paper has been published in whole or in part and states the primary reference. A suitable footnote might read: 'This article is based on a study first reported in the [title of journal, with full reference].'

Permission for such secondary publication should be free of charge."

None of these procedures were followed for the article by Satoh et al. (2). The most important points to be noted about secondary publication are the approval of both editors, a note as to the secondary publication nature of the article, and that permission is required. It is this last point that stands out. Authors **must** obtain permission to reprint from the copyright holder. In most instances this is the publisher, whether that is a commercial publishing company or a nonprofit organization. That this permission be