

Living-long paper withdrawn after data questioned

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The authors of a widely reported study that offered an early glimpse into factors leading to long life are withdrawing the paper because of problems with some of the data they used.

The study, published last July in the journal *Science*, said that by looking at [genetic markers](#) the researchers were able to determine with 77 percent [accuracy](#) which gene groups came from people over 100.

The team looked at the genomes of 1,055 Caucasians born between 1890 and 1910 and compared them with 1,267 people born later. They called the results an early step to understanding the pathways that lead to surviving into old age.

The research team, led by Paola Sebastiani and Thomas T. Perls of Boston University, says in Thursday's edition of *Science* that a quality control problem with one of the instruments they used to study [genes](#) caused some false positive findings, and they have reanalyzed the results without that information.

"We feel the main scientific findings remain supported by the available data," the researchers said.

However, they added: "Details of the new analysis change substantially from those originally published online to the point of becoming a new report. Therefore, we retract the original manuscript and will pursue alternative publication of the new findings."

In an accompanying statement, the journal said that while the researchers remain confident about their findings: "Science has concluded on the basis of peer-review that a paper built on the corrected data would not meet the journal's standards for genome-wide association studies."

The [editors](#) of Science stressed that "there was no misconduct by Sebastiani and colleagues. The researchers worked exhaustively to correct the errors in the original paper and we regret that the outcome of the extensive revision and re-review process was not more favorable."

Science publishes about 800 articles a year of which three to five are eventually retracted for one reason or another.

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