

Claim by researcher of injecting iPS cells into heart failure patients found to be fraudulent

October 15 2012, by Bob Yirka

(Medical Xpress)—Shortly after it was announced that Japanese researcher Shinya Yamanaka had won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work in seeking alternatives to embryonic cells for use in stem cell research, fellow Japanese researcher Hisashi Moriguchi claimed that he and a team had injected iPS cells into the hearts of six human patients at Harvard Medical Center. Now it appears that such claims were false. In a recent press conference, Moriguchi changed his story and insisted that the procedure had taken place at a Boston hospital, and that just one patient was involved, not six – the other five were still in the planning stages.

In changing his story, Moriguchi also stated that he had lied in his initial account. That version was published by Japan's biggest newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* which also stated that Moriguchi had received permission for the procedure from Harvard Medical School's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has stated that no such permission was given, nor was any such procedure performed.

The revelations about Moriguchi have caused reporters and the editors of [science journals](#) to investigate further his previous research and publications. In so doing they have found discrepancies in published reports of claims he's made, papers that list his name as author, and affiliations he has claimed as part of his work. In one instance, he was quoted by the newspaper *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* as stating that he had

used iPS [cells](#) to treat Hepatitis patients. In another instance, officials from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) reported that one of its staff members was listed in the first reference as an author of a paper submitted by Moriguchi. No evidence has been found that Moriguchi conducted any iPS treatment of Hepatitis patients, and the staff member at MGH says he never worked with Moriguchi. In addition, officials from Harvard have gone on record as saying that Moriguchi has not worked at any of their affiliated hospitals since a brief stint as a visiting fellow at MGH in 2000.

Moriguchi also claimed in a short correspondence printed in *Hepatology* in 2010, that he had devised a new way to create iPS cells, using just two chemicals, work that has not been verified and *Nature's* news [blog](#) has pointed out that images Moriguchi used in publications seem "remarkably similar" to images on the Advanced Fertility Center of Chicago's [web site](#).

In light of mounting evidence suggesting Moriguchi has been engaging in fraudulent activities, *Yomiuri Shimbun* printed a front page apology over its announcement heralding Moriguchi's achievement and at the end of his latest press conference, Moriguchi conceded that his career is likely over.

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