

All about IJC's correction policy

What happens when there are mistakes in a publication?

The International Journal of Cancer (IJC) has clear policies for handling different types of errors occurring in publications. There are several procedures for correction, depending on the type of mistake and on the timing after online publication. The journal has also set up a quality-check procedure at the editorial office, and checks all articles before publication in order to avoid time-consuming and unpleasant correction processes. In case of inconsistencies, IJC follows the appropriate guidelines set out by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

What are the types of errors?

There are many different types of errors, which range in severity: from authors' names and affiliations, sponsors' names, inaccuracies in text and references, up to cases of plagiarism, unethical research or extreme data manipulation. These represent the most critical situations, which require a thorough evaluation by the journal experts. For inconsistencies occurring in images IJC has implemented a special procedure for checking and handling image integrity issues. **For details please see our FAQ section about Image Integrity.**

What shall I do if I find mistakes?

IJC encourages authors and readers to check articles and notify the journal if they find errors, especially those that could affect the interpretation of data or information presented in an article. The first thing to do is to contact the Editorial Office. In the message, please report the title of the manuscript and explain in detail the type of error identified. Authors are also asked to please provide the original submission number and an alternative text and/or figure, which should be used for the final correction in the journal.

Can I still make a correction after my article has been published online?

- If a paper has just been published online as "Accepted Article" and the proofs have not been returned yet, minor issues can be rectified at the proof stage, without publishing a correction.
- If the paper is published as "Early View", the correction can be published online with a "statement of correction".
- If the paper has already been assigned to an issue, a form of correction needs to be published (see below).

Which types of correction are available?

A correction will be published under one of the following categories: Erratum, Expression of Concern, or Retraction. Corrections arising from minor errors are very different from Retractions or Expressions of Concern relating to misconduct. The journal's Editor-in-Chief always makes the final decision on a correction.

- **Erratum:** This is used when only minor issues that do not affect the main outcome of the paper need to be fixed. This correction category can also apply if authors can provide compelling explanations for the mislabeling of figures. An Erratum can be initiated by authors as well as by the journal.
- **Expression of Concern:** An Expression of Concern is used in unresolved cases where the evidence is inconclusive, i.e. inconsistencies in images could not be proven without source data, but well-founded concerns about the dataset remain and the reader should be made aware of potentially misleading information. An Expression of concern is published by the Editor-in-Chief.
- **Retraction:** A retraction of a published article is necessary when there are serious issues that invalidate the conclusions of the paper. It often applies when cases of serious scientific misconduct relating to figures, duplicate or redundant publications, or plagiarism have been confirmed. A retraction is most often initiated by the journal, however, it may also be initiated upon the authors or institutional request. A retraction should clearly state who is responsible for the decision and whether the authors agreed with the retraction. All Retraction statements are reviewed and approved by Wiley lawyers.