Author's response to reviews

Title: Analysis of Meniscal Degeneration and Meniscal Gene Expression

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Author's response to reviews:

December 8, 2009

Associate Editor

Biomedcentral

RE: Manuscript ID 2053294866301052

Dear Associate Editor:

We would like to thank you and the reviewers for the effort putting into our manuscript. We have revised our manuscript accordingly. The following page contains our responses with a point-by-point discussion of the changes made. We hope that you will find the manuscript in its present form suitable for publication in your Journal. If you have further questions in regards to the manuscript, please contact me at yubo.sun@carolinas.org.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Sincerely,

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1. Where appropriate, authors should adhere to the standards proposed by the Microarray Gene Expression Data Society (http://www.mged.org) and must
deposit microarray data in one of the public repositories, such as ArrayExpress (http://www.ebi.ac.uk/arrayexpress), Gene Expression Omnibus (GEO; http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/projects/geo/) or the Center for Information Biology Gene Expression Database (CIBEX; http://cibex.nig.ac.jp).

Response: The microarray data have been deposited in Gene Expression Omnibus. In page nine of this revised manuscript, following sentence has been added “The microarray data can be found in Gene Expression Omnibus (GEO; http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/projects/geo/) with the accession number #GSE19060”

2. Experimental research that is reported in the manuscript must have been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee. Informed consent must be documented.

Response: In page five of this revised manuscript, following sentence has been added “The need for informed consent was waived since menisci and articular cartilage were surgical waste of routine joint replacement surgery and lower limb amputation surgery, and there was no patient private information being collected”

3. I would ask that the sentiment of this final sentence of the Discussion should also be reflected in the abstract? i.e. that the gene expression changes noted are unlikely to be due simply to differences in ages between the donors of control and OA cells used, as many of the genes have been shown to be differentially expressed in other OA cell types/tissues.

Response: The abstract has been revised accordingly.

4. The Discussion should also note that these differences in donor ages were unavoidable, as it was not possible to obtain age-matched samples, although obviously were they available in the future a stronger study could be performed.

Response: In page sixteen of this revised manuscript, following has been added “It is difficult to obtain age-matched control meniscal specimens because osteosarcoma occurs often in younger patients while OA occurs mostly in older patients. We will continue this line of study when more age matched normal control meniscal specimens become available in the future”