

Sensationalism or news? Was journal right to publish CRISPR 'off-target mutations' study?

[When] doctors from Columbia, Stanford, and the University of Iowa published [a one-page letter](#) to the editor of *Nature Methods* describing...2,000 unintended mutations throughout each mouse's genome [after using CRISPR], the ensuing headlines were gleefully apocalyptic: "[Crispr May Not Be Nearly as Precise as We Thought](#)," "Crack in Crispr Facade after Unanticipated In Vivo Mutations Arise," and "[Small Study Finds Fatal Flaw in Gene Editing Tool Crispr](#)."

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While some experts decried the paper as unnewsworthy, the majority of threads ticked off the experiment's flaws: Tiny sample size! Insufficient controls! Weird Crispr delivery! Out of date/inefficient version of Crispr! The list goes on.

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But most scientists, while skeptical of the results, were more disappointed in the way the paper was blown out of proportion...[However,] the authors weren't just scientists: They were also doctors.

Vinit Majahan, an ophthalmologist at Stanford and co-author of [the] Crispr paper, says it was in that spirit that he and his collaborators submitted their results to the journal. "I don't have any money in Crispr, I only have patients," he says. "The culture and pressures of science right now push people to not share results that aren't a splashy cure. But in medicine you can't do that. If you make an observation that's important enough to share with your community, you're obligated to do that right away."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [CRISPR's Next Big Debate: How Messy Is Too Messy?](#)