

Cervical cancer-causing human papillomaviruses have an alternative initiation site for the L1 protein

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In our article [1] we stated that Zhou et al. [2] used prototype HPV16 L1 in their pioneering work on expression of recombinant HPV virus-like particles (VLPs). We carried out DNA sequencing [3] of the L1 ORF in the pLC201 plasmid vector used by Zhou et al. A sample of pLC201 lodged in 1992 [4] was obtained from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC #75226) for this purpose. The sequencing revealed the L1 ORF was wild type and encoded an amino acid sequence identical to the 114K isolate of HPV16 [5, 6]. When incorporated into a baculovirus vector, this L1 sequence produced VLPs in insect cells that bound monoclonal antibodies recognising conformational neutralising epitopes [3, 7, 8].

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