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The Lombardi et al. and Lo et al. studies were done using four different methods of detection. They were not simply PCR experiments, as were the studies by McClure et al. and others who have recently reported their difficulties with contamination. Experienced researchers such as Mikovits, Lombardi, Lo and their collaborators understand the limitations of PCR technology, especially the possibility of sample contamination. As a result, we and Lo et al. conducted rigorous studies to prevent and rule out any possibility that the results reported were from contamination.

In addition to the use of PCR methodology, the Lombardi team used two other scientific techniques to determine whether, in fact, we had found new retroviruses in human blood samples. We identified a human antibody response to a gamma retroviral infection and we demonstrated that live gamma retrovirus isolated from human blood could infect human cells in culture. These scientific findings cannot be explained by contamination with mouse cells, mouse DNA or XMRV-related virus-contaminated human tumor cells. No mouse cell lines and none of the human cell lines reported today by Hue et al. to contain XMRV were ever cultured in the WPI lab where our PCR experiments were performed. Humans cannot make antibodies to viruses related to murine leukemia viruses unless they have been exposed to virus proteins. Therefore, recent publications regarding PCR contamination do not change the conclusions of the Lombardi et al. and Lo et al. studies that concluded that patients with ME/CFS are infected with human gammaretroviruses. We have never claimed that CFS was caused by XMRV, only that CFS patients possess antibodies to XMRV related proteins and harbor infectious XMRV, which integrates into human chromosomes and thus is a human infection of as yet unknown pathogenic potential.

"The coauthors stand by the conclusions of Lombardi et al. Nothing that has been published to date refutes our data." Judy A. Mikovits