



Facts About Stem Cell Research

Maryland Right to Life supports stem cell research. We do not oppose the rightful use of science and technology to develop effective treatments and cures for the diseases and conditions that affect humankind. However, we object to treating some human lives as commodities that may be destroyed for the supposed good of others.

Research on human embryos is morally abhorrent. It is the moral equivalent of doing deadly experiments on condemned prisoners or terminally ill patients with the justification that “they’re going to die anyway, so why not benefit from their deaths?”

Embryonic stem cell research inevitably requires cloning. The number of frozen embryos available for research from in vitro fertilization is not adequate to meet the demands of research. To meet the need, scientists are able to create human embryos through somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) — a process identical to that used for cloning, except that embryos are destroyed after four or five days of development to retrieve their stem cells. This process is legal and sanctioned by the government.

Embryonic stem cells have produced NO cures or treatments. Years of research involving embryonic stem cells have not produced a single clinical success. However, embryonic stem cells have been shown to produce tumors in animals.

Embryonic stem cells may be generated without destroying human embryos. In 2007, two teams of scientists, working separately, developed a technique for reprogramming adult cells to create embryonic stem cells. The reprogrammed cells, called “induced pluripotent stem cells (or iPS cells) have the exact same characteristics as embryonic stem cells (including the tendency to product tumors). Induced pluripotent cells may actually be better for research and clinical therapies, because they can be made from the patient’s own cells and therefore may not cause tissue rejection.

Non-embryonic stem cells are curing patients now! Adult stem cells—which may be harvested from placenta or umbilical cord blood, amniotic fluid, human bone marrow or fat tissue, and other sources throughout the human body—been successfully used to treat more than 70 diseases or conditions. Numerous clinical trials involving adult stem cells are currently underway.

Adult stem cells are superior to embryonic stem cells. They do not cause tumors. They may be taken from the patient’s own tissue in some cases, and so would not cause tissue rejection. They are widely and readily available, and they pose no moral or ethical problems. They are already benefiting patients, and they do not destroy human life.

To learn more, visit www.stemcellresearch.org or subscribe to the [Stem Cell Research Report](#), a bimonthly digest of recent stem cell news.