

CATHOLIC TEACHING ON STEM CELL RESEARCH

The Catholic Church fully supports moral and life-affirming scientific advancements to treat disease and disability. In fact, the Church's health care ministry is on the cutting edge of ethical medical research to ease human suffering and treat such diseases as Parkinson's, diabetes, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, lymphoma, and ailments such as spinal cord injuries.

Much of the research in treating disease focuses on stem cells, which have the potential to change into any kind of specialized cell the body may need to repair itself. There are two basic kinds of stem cells: embryonic and adult stem cells.

Embryonic stem cells are obtained by deliberately destroying living human embryos at about 5 days old. These embryos can be obtained either from the freezers of fertility clinics or the experimental process of human cloning. The Catholic Church opposes embryonic stem cell research because it always relies on the destruction of some defenseless human being for possible benefit to others. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states clearly: "It is immoral to produce human embryos intended for exploitation as disposable biological material (§2275)."

Adult stem cells are obtained from born human beings without any harm to them. Adult stem cells are commonly extracted from the circulating blood of adults, bone marrow, fat and the umbilical cords of newborn babies. Researchers in the U.S. have been successfully using adult stem cells to treat genetic disease in children, including rare diseases affecting the heart, liver and brain. Adult stem cells from umbilical cord blood can successfully turn into healthy heart cells and repair damaged tissue. Groundbreaking research shows that adult stem cells extracted from the nasal cavity have been successfully used to stimulate feeling and movement in the legs of paraplegics. The Catholic Church fully supports adult stem cell research which is highly successful in treating human disease and suffering, and involves no harm to human life.

Did You Know?

AMERICANS PREFER FUNDING ADULT STEM CELL RESEARCH OVER EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH BY A 60% TO 22% MARGIN.

— INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH, 5/05

FACT

Because embryonic stem cells are immature and unpredictable, they often cause tumor growth.

FACT

Embryonic stem cells have not produced one single medical benefit for human beings to date. In comparison, adult stem cells have provided medical benefit to humans in thousands of cases.

FACT

Researchers have found that adult stem cells have the same ability to multiply and regenerate as embryo stem cells (Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, 6/05).

What You Can Do...

- * Comfort, help and pray for families struggling with disease, disability, and suffering.
- * Join the Catholic Advocacy Network at www.nyscatholic.org
- * Write a Letter to the Editor of your local newspaper distinguishing ethical and successful adult stem cell research from immoral embryonic stem cell research.

FAMILY LIFE † RESPECT LIFE OFFICE

1011 FIRST AVENUE | NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022 | TEL: 212.371.1000 EXT. 3185 | FAX: 212.371.3382 | WWW.FLRL.ORG

RESPECTING LIFE: A CALL FOR ETHICAL STEM CELL RESEARCH

EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH DEPENDS ON HUMAN CLONING.

- Embryonic stem cell research entails cloning, organ harvesting and the destruction of human life.
- Every bill currently pending in the New York State Legislature to allow embryonic stem cell research would also authorize and fund – with taxpayer dollars – the cloning of human beings to be used for research.

EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH IS TEAMED WITH BIG BUSINESS.

- The biotechnology industry, pharmaceutical companies, and university researchers desire government funding for embryo research in order to increase private investments. There is a tremendous amount of money to be made from the sale of human embryo stem cell lines and the patenting of the human products of embryonic research.
- For every dollar the government gives to unsuccessful embryonic stem cell research, it takes a dollar away from successful adult stem cell research which has provided medical benefits to human beings in thousands of cases.
- Ethical adult stem cell research offers medical hope and cures *today*, while embryonic stem cell research offers big money for biotech companies, pharmaceutical companies and university researchers.

EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH IS UNSUCCESSFUL.

- Embryonic stem cell research has not produced one single medical benefit for humans.
- Embryonic stem cells are unstable and unpredictable because of their immaturity and have produced troubling research results in animals, including tumor growth and cancer.
- Promotion of embryonic stem cells as “the best hope” for a cure to human suffering is dishonest, irresponsible and cruel to suffering individuals and their families who are searching for hope.

ADULT STEM CELL RESEARCH CAN CURE DISEASE AND PROTECT LIFE.

- In addition to human embryos, stem cells can also be found in umbilical cord blood, circulating blood, bone marrow, fat and various other adult human tissues.
- These stem cells, called adult stem cells, have provided medical benefits in thousands of cases and are currently being used to treat genetic diseases in children, childhood leukemia, and rare diseases affecting the liver, heart and brain.
- Doctors have successfully formed adult stem cells into healthy heart and brain cells, and stem cells from the nasal cavity have been used to stimulate feeling and movement in the legs of paraplegics.
- Adult stem cell research can be successful without the destruction of human life. It is both ethical and beneficial.

PLEASE CONTACT THE GOVERNOR AND YOUR STATE SENATOR –
URGE THEM TO SUPPORT ETHICAL ADULT STEM CELL RESEARCH

AND

OPPOSE HUMAN CLONING AND EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH!

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS ELECTRONICALLY AT WWW.NYSCATHOLIC.ORG

HON. _____

NYS SENATE

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG.

ALBANY NY 12247

518-455-2800 (SWITCHBOARD)

WWW.SENATE.STATE.NY.US — CLICK “SENATORS”

HON. GEORGE E. PATAKI

GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK STATE

STATE CAPITOL

ALBANY, NY 12224

518-474-8390 I 518-474-1513 (FAX)

WWW.STATE.NY.US/GOVERNOR

FAMILY LIFE † RESPECT LIFE OFFICE

1011 FIRST AVENUE | NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022 | TEL: 212.371.1000 EXT. 3185 | FAX: 212.371.3382 | WWW.FLRL.ORG