Compiled Messages

Download | Close

Message no. 169
Posted by **Timothy Hosford** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 11:41am
Subject: Discussion Post #2

Knowing what I do so far about the treatments for Parkinsons, I would have to say that drugs like L Dopa are a temporary repreive at best, and a false hope at worst. With such bad side effects, I think it should be used sparingly, and the patient should be made fully aware of the side effects and the fact that it is only temporary.

Then there's the touchy subject or implants. Personally, the fact that we can tamper so presicely with our own makeup is both frightening and fascinating. I think that it is definitely worth persuing, because it seems like there could be many more conditions which may be helped than just Parkinsons. If animal tissues could be used, that'd be great, but i think we'd have better luck with human cells. I don't know how the rejection rates compare between animel and human implants measure up, but somehow i think human implants would have a better chance of success.

Message no. 171[Branch from no. 169]
Posted by **Brent Sullivan** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 2:14pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

This really is an ethical question and regardless of the means by which anyone supports their side of the argument opposition will be met. What guides one to decide whether an aborted fetus should be used or not? I believe this question is very similar to the animal rights question. Groups are associating their fundamentalist views on subject matters which no one has the answer to. On questioning the right or not of using aborted fetus stem cells the answer lies within the individual solely and therein lies the greatest flaw. While deciding some will place their personal views in front of the concrete facts. These opposing arguments are supported by morals, ethics but above all religion. If the fetus could be determined to have never had consciousness and thus never have been a real person then what would be the harm in extracting cells to save or repair another?s life. In effect when one selects to not give up the cells then isn?t the result only negative? One person remains in agony and one dies. The question really is a matter of facts to me and morals can only support my decision.

Message no. 174[Branch from no. 171]
Posted by **Ashley Rader** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 4:48pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

It seems to me that all questions of life and death have moral implications. Fetal tissue transplantation using the stem cells from fetuses that suffer non-elective abortions doesn't seem to me to pose the ethical and moral questions raised by use of fetal stem cells harvested from elective abortions. But the fact of the matter remains, it is the mother who chooses the abortion, for whatever reasons. The person who suffers from Parkinsonism can scarcely be held accountable for the decisions made by a person unknown to the victim of the disease. Where, then, is the moral dilemma? The answer remains, it lies with the mother. I suppose laws can be passed to limit abortions to some set of conditions that don't involve Parkinsonism, but if we're going to allow abortion on demand, I scarcely see how it can be limited without creating a set of problems of enormous proportions and scope. Government really shouldn't try to legislate morality. That is the domain of organized religion, for whatever that's worth. Ashley Rader

---

Message no. 177[Branch from no. 171]
Posted by **Michelle Bower** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 1:52am
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

i believe that parkinson's disease patients should not be allowed to use brain tissue or stem cells from aborted fetuses because this would be supporting abortion. on the other hand, i do not feel as strong about not using animal tissue, but i still thing it would be wrong.

Message no. 183[Branch from no. 177]
Posted by **Veronica Schoo** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 10:27am
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

I think that people who disagree with abortion and do not support abortion ofcourse

would not choose to have the implants. It should be noted: the person who is having the abortion is already having the abortion regardless. Surgeons are not probing pregnant women to have an abortion for the sake of using the cells left over. Instead of completely disregarding the remains of the fetus, it is being utilized to save a person suffering from the effects of a very serious disease: Parkinsons.

Message no. 194[Branch from no. 183]
Posted by **Lorena Arredondo** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 9:09pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

I agree, if anything good would come out of an abortion, using that fetus to save another would be perhaps a positive alternative to an already negative decision. Lorena Arredondo

---

Message no. 190[Branch from no. 177]
Posted by **Ali Tonguc** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 2:28pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

I think there is no connection between the use of brain tissues of a fetus and to support abortion. I'm not saying that I am for abortion but It is a fact that people who decide to have an abortion will have an abortion whether the brain tissue of the fetus will be utilized or not. That's why I think it is morally not wrong to use the brain tissues of an aborted fetus in order to save another person's life.

Message no. 192[Branch from no. 171]
Posted by **Jimenez Elizabeth** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 2:52pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2

I read your posting and I saw that you would base your decision on morals. I ask you this know what have one of your loved ones had Parkinson disease and that means that they could have symptoms such as not being able to walk or feed themselves. That means that the person would lose everything it had and somebody would have to care for them. Then you were offered to use the method of implanting the pigs tissue would you say to your loved one to do it or would you say no because it was a pig's tissue knowing that your loved one is suffering since he can't do simple everyday life tasks.

Message no. 170
Posted by **Brent Sullivan** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 2:13pm
Subject: Discussion Post 2

The question asked is exclusively subjective and open for debate and thus any argument will suffice as a means for answering the question which really draws on a sensitive topic for fundamentalists and non-fundamentalists alike. I will examine purely that piece of the argument which I advocate. I am fully convinced that the future of therapy for Parkinson?s disease resides within stem-cell research and its progressions. When assessing the marginal gain gathered by the lives saved in comparison with the amount of dead animal tissue left over there really is no question on my mind as to what needs to begin and become commonplace. To further bolster my argument tests have already been conducted on many voluntary patients who have suffered from stroke and epilepsy and have reported positive results. More importantly patients who have received stem cells from aborted fetuses have shown moderate to great improvement in their battle with Parkinson?s disease.

Difficult as it may be to come to terms with stem cell research is the future of improving prognosis?s world wide. This is really an ethical debate; few it seems are left feeling guilty after a pig?s cells are transported but that number inverts when aborted human fetus cells are used in its place. But if the question could be rewritten and if the fetus could be determined to have no consciousness and thus not actually be considered living then would the argument change, and if so how many would change their vote to suit a growing population those supporting stem cell research. I can see no other option when comparing what can be gained with what is going to be lost anyway when deciding whether to perform this procedure or not.

Message no. 173[Branch from no. 170]
Posted by **Sarah Ball** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 2:22pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post 2

True, it does seem that the gains greatly outweigh the losses, but as I mentioned in my post I worry that women would be pressured into aborting their babies for the sake of science. For this reason I hope that the use of animal stem cells can be perfected and

used.

Message no. 188[Branch from no. 173]
Posted by **Mariah Gordon** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 12:21pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post 2

I would do the surgery, instead oif trying the l-dopa medacines side effects. i would do the operation, expecially if it appeared at an early stage of my life since once you are older the brain looses plastically compared to while you are younger. i mean what do you have to loose it may or may not be helpful but at least with the procedure you wont have the bad side affects as with the l-dopa. It may be loosing life to protect anoptha but with fetuses the life is already lost so if you can put the tissue from them to use why not, i dont feel im being imsensitive because i have gone with a procedure, using the fetuses would be wonderful since abortion is not going to go away any time soon. I do not feel that it would change womans opinions on wether or not they should keep or abort thier baby, thats going to happend either way.

Message no. 176[Branch from no. 170]
Posted by **Jonathan Dautrich** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 7:27pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post 2

I realize that this is a bit long-winded, so if you would like the quick version, try reading the first and final paragraphs. However, if you can, I encourage you to read through the whole thing, especially if you intend to comment on it. I did my best to stay objective, and would like to know what all of you think of the approach to the concept. Thanks for reading! ---

I would like to address the argument that has been made stating that if a human fetus could be shown to have no consciousness, it would not be alive (or at least not independently alive), and therefore there should be no moral scruple about using it for research. I would most readily agree with this statement in this: if a human fetus is not independently alive, there is nothing wrong with using, even destroying, it in the name of scientific research. So then, the real question is whether the fetus is independently alive, and ultimately what defines independent life.

To start off, we must note that a plant is independently alive by most definitions, but few if any would argue that the killing of a plant raises moral issues. So then, we must be talking about a kind of life that is not possessed by a plant. What about simple independent organisms, or even organisms that are made to exist outside of their normal host. Would a human heart that was biologically sustained outside of its previous owner's body have a "right to life?" What about something like an amoeba? Clearly, most would agree that none of these things listed so far have a "right" to existence. What about a worm, an ant, a fly, a rat, a dog, a dolphin, a chimpanzee, a human? Where do we try to draw the line, and why? What is the difference between a plant, an organ, and a creature? Between a simple creature and a complex one? Between an animal and a human? Between a fetus, a newborn, and an adult? Scientifically, these are all simply various combinations of matter and energy, different biological structures, some more complicated than others, but why do some have a right to life and others do not?

Someone proposed consciousness as the difference, but what is consciousness? Even our own text-book said that consciousness is a mystery, that it is something that does not really have a physical explanation. The book suggests that it may be just another understanding of the biological processes undergone by our brains. If so, what is so superior about the biological processes that go on in our brains to those of a dog, a fly, or even a plant? Consciousness then, defined this way, could not be used as a criteria for the kind of independent life we are looking for, since we already decided that a plant does not possess this independent life – this "right to life."

So then, if we choose to associate consciousness with life, we must first acknowledge that this consciousness is something non-biological – something non-material. If so, can we rely on a biological analysis to determine its presence? If it is immaterial, then how can we suppose that a physical examination of those materials will tell us whether or not those materials possess consciousness?

In that case, we have a choice to make – either nothing immaterial exists, in which case there is no independent life, no "true" consciousness, and ultimately no reason for any one set of biologically living tissue to be valued above another – or something immaterial does exist, let's call it consciousness, and the possession of this consciousness is what gives us an independent life and a right to life. In fact, it may even be what causes us to believe that some biological tissues have a right to life and that others do not.

Either way, we are faced with the complication of knowing which organisms possess this consciousness. Now, there are two approaches that we can take to this, in fact to the entire argument as it exists so far. Either we assume that there is an absolute truth – that is, that only one explanation is the right one – or we assume that everything is relative – that is, that there is no correct answer to anything, that nothing is, in fact, "the way things really are." For those who hold this viewpoint of relativism, I see little point in continued reading – in fact, I see little point in education at all. Why bother learning and searching for answers, facts, the truth, if it is not to be found. Even other peoples' opinions are not worth listening to in this case, as their opinion may be their opinion to them, but different to you or someone else. All that said, I will take the standpoint of one who believes in an actual accuracy – an "absolute truth."

So back to the question of which organisms possess this consciousness – this something other than mere biological material – does it belong to all beings of a given biological species? Perhaps, but not necessarily. However, for our purposes, let's just assume that all adult humans possess it, as we are able to communicate with each other and generally agree that we all possess it. So then, when do we receive it? Is it when we turn 18? Doubtful. Is it when our umbilical cord is cut? Is it when we first move on our own within the womb? Is it at conception? The problem with all of these things is that they are purely biological, but since we have determined consciousness to be something not biological, there is no reason that it would be necessarily associated with any of these. So perhaps the question is, then, not whether an individual biological organism possesses consciousness, but whether it has the potential to possess consciousness. In the case of humans, any embryo theoretically has the potential to become a human adult, and thus to achieve consciousness. So then, a "human" possesses the potential to attain consciousness the moment it becomes an independent biological organism – that is, when the dependent sperm and egg fuse to become an independent separate organism. Now, some may argue that the conceptualized human organism is dependent, as it is living off of the mother, biologically connected via the umbilical cord. This is true; however, it is not dependent in the sense in which I have been using the word – while it is physically connected, it is a separate instance of the human race. It not only has the potential to become a human (as some would argue that the separated sperm-egg combination have), but it also possesses a fundamental composition (identity) different from that of the father or the mother instances of the human race, while the sperm and egg are individually parts of their respective sources.

So, to sum up, we have determined that all instances of the human race receive their biological "identity" (in the sense of being separate from other current members of the race) during conception, that all of these instances possess the ability to become human adults, that all human adults possess consciousness (life), and that this life carries with it a right to existence. The only remaining thing then is to fill in the gap – to decide whether a human, even if it does not yet possess the adult consciousness, deserves the right to fulfill its potential to possess it. The real question then is this: is it any less wrong to deprive a being of consciousness when it has yet to experience it than when it has already experienced it? I cannot see how it is. If we believed that it was wrong to deprive a man of sex, why would it be any less wrong to castrate him before he could experience it than after? This question then – whether it is right to deprive a human being of life simply because he/she has not yet experienced it – is the crucial one. I do not see how it can be in light of the aforementioned. However, even if it is, we are playing a dangerous game by trying to guess at what stage a human achieves life-consciousness, since, as we discussed, it is something that is beyond our ability to determine by our physical means. If it turns out that life-consciousness is granted as early as

conception, then by destroying these un-borns, we are opening ourselves up to whatever consequences may accompany the violation of our mutually-acknowledged right-to-life.

-Jonathan Dautrich

Message no. 172
Posted by **Sarah Ball** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 2:20pm
Subject: Post #2

While the use of L-Dopa is certainly a less controversial approach, it doesnt seem fair to keep offering it up to people knowing it will not cure their ailments when there may be a way to.
   While it may seem like a logical answer to the problem of Parkinson's to simply start doing the implants using fetal tissue, I have a moral concern with this solution. True, babies get aborted and there is nothing I personally can do about it, but what is worrysome is the thought that pregnant women not wanting their babies may be pressured into aborting for the purpose of "saving someone's life". Despite how you personally feel about abortion I think you should agree that this possibility is a little scary. If we were, however able to refine the use of animal tissues I think it would be a miraculous break through and a wonderful hope for those people and families plagued by seemingly uncurable ailments.

Message no. 186[Branch from no. 172]
Posted by **Regina Huerta** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 11:29am
Subject: Re: Post #2

Stem cell research, like organ donation is a way to save lives. Should we really have to persuade ourselves to do it? The woman is already going to "give up" her baby, why not use it-(him or her) to possibly find a cure or allleviate the sympotoms? What better way, what more priceless gift is there to give? This is the only way for the little life once intended to actually live on. - This is not a personal attack against you or even to say that I think you're wrong because I don't, I feel everyone is entitled to their own opinion. I merely hope to say that no one can persuade anyone to do anything as controversial as the "medical advocation" for abortion(s).

Message no. 200[Branch from no. 172]
Posted by **Cathryn Hill** on Monday, April 25, 2005 2:33am
Subject: Re: Post #2

I do not think that women will feel any pressure to abort thier babies for the purpose for this research, or to save someone. That is not the point of the research. Also, the stem cells do not have to come form the embryos, other ways were mentioned. I think that If anything a woman might see it as a relief of guilt, not as a reason.

Message no. 175
Posted by **Jonathan Dautrich** on Saturday, April 23, 2005 5:13pm
Subject: Discussion Post #2 - Jonathan Dautrich

Although the work regarding the transplant of fetal pigs' brain tissue and research in the area of human embryonic stem cells is doubtless producing improvements in Parkinson's patients, I do not see this as being the best route for us to take. Wesley J. Smith wrote an article discussing the successes and possibilities of adult stem cells (http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-smith042302.asp) as an alternative that not only avoids the moral concerns present in embryonic stem cell research, but has also produced benefits in humans that "supporters of embryonic-stem-cell treatments have yet to produce widely," even in animal experiments. Mr. Smith discusses the strange hesitance of the news to cover cases such as the one in which a Parkinson's patient in his 50s achieved a 37% increase in his motor skills only three months after being injected with tissue derived from stem cells extracted from his own body, without being on any other Parkinson's medication. He also discusses a set of operations in which 20 out of 26 rapidly deteriorating multiple-sclerosis patients stabilized after being treated with adult stem cells.

Personally, I would be uncomfortable with the idea of external cells, whether from an animal or from another human, being injected into and made to grow as a part of me at all, but imagine that if such a process were necessary to save my life, I would be able to "get over it." However, in the case of human embryonic tissue, the big issue for me

would be the moral issue involving how that tissue became available. I believe it is wrong to trigger the creation of a human life and then destroy it just to prolong mine; why am I any more important than the life that would be destroyed to save me?

-Jonathan

Message no. 195[Branch from no. 175]
Posted by **Suheilah Abdalla** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 9:10pm
Subject: Re: Discussion Post #2 - Jonathan Dautrich

Hi!

I am of the opinion that stem/embryonic cells are a great breakthrough in Parkinson's disease.

In regards to your last paragraph, I respect your view on stem/embryonic cells to save your life, but why should this be a national policy? If there are some who are uncomfortable with this type of treatment, why should they be denied because others don't?

Message no. 178
Posted by **Jason Hernandez** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 1:56am
Subject: DC Post -- Topic #2 by Jason DH...

(*Hello! Greetings to everyone from Phoenix, I'll be back late Monday morning, so this is my one shot to get this in from my hotel room...*)

Based on what I've read, and what we've talked about in class, I think some of the side effects are far too great to NOT use stem cells or animal tissue. Granted, I know this is like already taking a life, and this could go into a whole philisophocal and ethical question; but I feel that the future of medical improvement has some kind of small price to pay. Unfortunately, L-Dopa can only go so far in many patients, and it could be making the patient suffer even more with those severe side-effects.

The way I see it, we could either suffer with this dibilitating disease, or approve of what could be used from animal and fetal tissues. Of course, stem cell research still has a long way to go, and it COULD be possible where stem cells could produce dopamine-releasing neurons and go into brain-damaged areas...but it COULD also be possible where this simply doesn't work, and the cells simply don't respond with the rest of the neurons in the brain. This is still like taking a chance, but this seems like a better chance than taking L-Dopa and having to reap the side effects (nausea, high-blood pressure, sleep problems). Plus, at least many of these tests are beginning to advance and show some promise...like the monkey case. Since monkeys are very closely related to humans, it could be possible that this same kind of treatment could reverse the effects of Parkinson's on typical humans, si? Granted, monkey embryonic cells worked with monkeys, but would monkey embryos work as well on humans as human stem cells? Folks, this is going to be here to stay, despite all the political wars about stem cell research...and all the ethical questions that so-called "experts" will make reguarding whether it's worth it.

Of course, these fetal tissues that are implanted to a Parkinson's patient would still have to make synapses with the old cells, but that's still not guaranteed. ANY type of surgery is not guaranteed. Wha...I'm sorry to scare you folks, but pretty much any type of surgery is never guaranteed, that's why they make you sign waivers and the such. Neural cells will naturally die since the average person loses about a percent of substantia nigra neurons per year....at least people over 45. So of course those implanted cells will most likely die off soon after the surgery anyway, but as long as you can ease the suffering of the patient, then I think it may just very well be worth it, and I would be okay with that. Thank you.

The moral of the story...no...the message....nuh-uh....the after-thought of my post is this: Your parents raised you guys well! After all, they raised you well enough to be going to college. Make them proud, and take care of them, because you never know. *sigh* You just never know...

Message no. 181
Posted by **Priscella Jaen** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 10:10am
Subject: discussion2- Priscella

Though L-dopa is lacking in hope, I don't understand why we would discontinue the use, especially if it does relieve symptoms temporarily. I guess it's the thought process of, "it's better than nothing."
I believe that the future in Parkinson's therapy definitely lies within implanting of stem cells, and not in animal tissue. Though scientists could be on a really great "break through" or "almost there," with animal tissue, it seems unlikely that people would stand for the use of "innocent creatures" (especially those at high risk of distinction).
I would prefer animals over humans, but if we are taking the cells from already aborted fetus', it is better to use them than to let them go to waste. However, there is never any

justification for forced life deprivation on any human being, and I am almost certain that people would begin to justify their abortions under the terms, "but it's for research" or "I am helping so many others."
In a way, I am almost insensitive towards the use of any tissues because, though preservation of life can be maintained using science for a short period of time, life will end eventually. Though dying of Parkinson's would be a terribly painful death, the use of tissues promotes the death of others for the life of one. And the "others" wouldn't be giving their cells willingly, and I'm sure we wont ask if we can take them either.

Message no. 207[Branch from no. 181]
Posted by **James Cunnigham** on Monday, April 25, 2005 11:23am
Subject: Re: discussion2- Priscella

I agree with the fact that an already aborted fetus should not be put to waste but being that i do not believe in abortion at all, i feel that it is wrong. that is just my biased opinion on the issue. looking past my own moral and ethical beliefs, I can see what you are talking about. I just feel that pigs and other animals are slaughtered for numerous reasons other than to benifit someones health so a lot of them are already raised just to be killed. there are no circumstances where humans are made to be killed (except in the military) so I just feel that it is wrong.

Message no. 182
Posted by **Veronica Schoo** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 10:13am
Subject: I'd risk the op.

Personally I would not choose to sustain all of the terrible side effects inflicted by the medicines used to treat Parkinson’s disease. If I had severe Parkinson’s disease at an early age, I would prefer to go through the operation to surgically implant fetal/embryonic brain tissue. I would rather go through the operation and take the involved risks rather than living with Parkinson’s disease at an early age. Honestly, I like the sound of having human brain tissue implanted in my brain as appose to animal tissue, but if there is no big difference- either one is fine.

Message no. 208[Branch from no. 182]
Posted by **Emily Quintana** on Monday, April 25, 2005 11:48am
Subject: Re: I'd risk the op.

I would risk the operation as well. I don't feel that this kind of surgery is morally or ethically wronge. I believe if there is a way to save your life, take it. I think it would be more wronge to refuse the surgery, if you are well enough to handle it. The medications perscribed for parkinson's have horrible side effects and l-dopa will only work for so long, not long enough. In my opinion, if I had Parkinson's I would start taking the medication a.s.a.p. Then find a doctor, the best doctor and get the surgery while I was well enough to handle it.
In my opinion, using aborted fetuses would be a more logical way of treating Parkinson's than animal tissue. I don't know much about this, only what we learned in class and online, but it seems like it would have a greater succes rate using cells from the same spieces. Regardless if people have parkinson's are not, abortions happen every day and they wont stop. If someones life can be saved and a good use could come of an unpleasent situation, why not?

Message no. 184
Posted by **Veronica Schoo** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 10:41am
Subject: I would do the surgery

Personally I would not choose to sustain all of the terrible side effects inflicted by the medicines used to treat Parkinson’s disease. If I had severe Parkinson’s disease at an early age, I would prefer to go through the operation to surgically implant fetal/embryonic brain tissue. I would rather go through the operation and take the involved risks rather than living with Parkinson’s disease at an early age. Honestly, I like the sound of having human brain tissue implanted in my brain as appose to animal tissue, but if there is no big difference either one is fine. However, if there was animal tissue used for implant in my brain and the operation was successful, I would most likely tell people it was human tissue anyways.
I do understand this may not be the most political correct opinion, especially for those who appose abortion, but I think each individual case is unique and it really depends on the person & situation to make this type of decision.

Message no. 185
Posted by **Regina Huerta** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 11:04am
Subject: Stem Cells/"Animal" Cells

Once again I find myself at the forefront of a "damned if you do," (definitely) "damned if you don't" scenario. A member of my family suffers (thankfully not from Parkinson's) but from something I feel equally as devastating, dementia. I feel we as a whole (based on personal beliefs) could be "damned if we do" simply because at the moment the embryonic stem cell tissues needed to be harvested from fetuses requires the deaths of so many to help one. It is not that I am against helping others or against taking risks to reap rewards and find cures or treatments that will make the disease less devastating or the possibility of treating other diseases, for me, it's simply the quantity required. Then again the fetuses were already to be terminated, perhaps in this way they live on and the life intended has a higher purpose?

We are truly "damned if we don't" in the most literal sense of the the phrase, simply because if we don't chance it, nothing will change, tens and hundreds of thousands will suffer, perhaps needlessly. Where would we be now without controversial medical advancements, dead from chicken pox, or from common colds and infections?

As far as what the future hold for us and those with the ravenous diseases, I would like to see scientists come to a point where they can genetically remanufacture stem cells, no longer requiring the use of actual fetuses. Plain and simple- A cure!

Message no. 187
Posted by **Mariah Gordon** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 11:51am
Subject: post #2

I feel that the usage of l-dopa , is lacking in to many areas, yea you should try it but if when you do all you receive is the bad side affects then don't take anymore. Most people will probably still take it knowing well its helping some, but if the side affects of it are affecting you more than bearable I feel the particular person should not use it. Of course it may do well but if your already ill and not feeling well then you shouldn't suffer more for the little it will help you. To me it's not worth it at all. I've seen a family member suffer more, once they started getting the treatment compared to how they were before the treatment. The side affects if it doesn't go right in your system once it passes through the barrier are not at all worth it.

Message no. 189
Posted by **Ali Tonguc** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 2:16pm
Subject: discussion post 2

I agree that the future in Parkinson's therapy lies with surgically implanting fetal/embryonic human brain tissue and the animal tissue. Since the medicines used to treat the Parkinson's disease showed many terrible side effects and at the same time implant of human/animal brain tissue seemed to be working very well, I would feel comfortable to have such operation if I were suffering from Parkinson's disease.
It is also a true fact that (whether it doesn't sound good to many people) people who decide to have an abortion will have an abortion whether the brain tissue of the fetus will be utilized or not. That's why I think it is morally not wrong to use the brain tissues of an aborted fetus in order to save another person's life.
Ali Tonguc

Message no. 191
Posted by **Jimenez Elizabeth** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 2:44pm
Subject: Discussion Post#2 By Elizabeth Jimenez

Yes I do believe that surgically implanting fetal embryonic human brain tissue and animal tissue is a better way to go because most of the people that have been tested with this method show long term improvement of Parkinson disease. For example the case of a fifty-one-year-old man named Jim Finn that had to deal with not being capable of feeding himself, and barely being able to walk, which is something that something would have to go through seeing those are necessities of an everyday life. Then Finn was injected with twelve million fetal pigs neural cells in the right side of the brain where he was not affected by the symptoms of Parkinson disease. Soon after that he began to improve in every thing he couldn't do before the surgery as walking without a cane and have more motor control. This proves that this is good and eventually would get even better if there are no horrible side effects if they keep researching it they could help a lot of people suffering.
No, I would not feel uncomfortable at any circumstances when they use human or animal brain tissue because it is benefitting another person drastically and that is very important. If it helping people from not suffering considering they could not

function with their daily activities necessary to live then why not use it to help people with Parkinson disease.

Message no. 193
Posted by **Suheilah Abdalla** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 9:06pm
Subject: animal bias?

I believe that the idea that stem/embryonic cells can be used as an alternative to L-Dopa and other Parkinson medications is an amazing breakthrough for Parkinson sufferers as well as neurologists. The absence of the terrible side-effects accompanying those medications is encouraging.

But then the ethical issues concerning the "blatant disregard of life" arise. Personally, I feel a zygote in the embryonic stage still isn't alive. Therfore, the question of "killing" it shouldn't even arise. My bias against animals is just to placate the ethical arguments. I would say that since animals are being slaughtered daily to feed the human population, why is it so wrong to save a life, or the lives of the 1.5 million Parkinson sufferers?

Message no. 204[Branch from no. 193]
Posted by **Sandra Spears** on Monday, April 25, 2005 11:00am
Subject: Re: animal bias?

I absolutely agree with you 110%. To rid of those side effects is one huge step in the research of this disease. Ha, animals are being slaughtered everyday and not necessarily to our benefit.

Message no. 196
Posted by **Lorena Arredondo** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 9:19pm
Subject: DC#2 by Lorena

Since L-Dopa's effectiveness varies in people, perhaps surgery is the best alternative, especially for those who have already tried L-Dopa and found no relief at all. The decision to chose a fetus or animal tissues lies which one the person would morally and consiously be comfortable with, unless of course their decision is purely based on finding an effective method of relief, which should be the botton line. The question should lie on the basis of effectiveness, not where it comes from, but what will give the patient with Parkinson's a life with less pain. L.A.

Message no. 197
Posted by **Nicholas Williams** on Sunday, April 24, 2005 10:44pm
Subject: Post 2 Answer

Personally, I don't see why the use of embryonic stem cells is objectionable if the cells are acquired from embryos that are marked for destruction anyway. Why anyone would have a problem with this is beyond me. That's like throwing away food in front of a starving person and saying "nope, sorry, you can't have it."

I do believe that the future of Parkinson's research, and indeed the future of the greater part of ALL medical research, is in stem cell research. I also think the majority of people arguing against stem cell research in the media have no idea of what they're talking about, and that's a shame. Sacrificing medical progress for the sake of these "morals" that some of these people claim to have is absurd, particularly in the light of their stances on other issues, i.e. *the death penalty*.

I think in this instance, the life of an embryo, which is at MOST just a couple of weeks removed from being sperm, which gets thrown away all the time, is maybe just a little bit lesser in value compared to the thousands of lives that could be saved by the research that could be done on the embryo. Sorry, but I think this attitude of "every life is precious, right from the instant the sperm hits the egg" viewpoint is ridiculous.

Message no. 198
Posted by **James Gregory** on Monday, April 25, 2005 12:30am
Subject: Pork chops and curing Parkinson's

Was I the only one that found it strange that they were injecting fetal pig tissue into peoples brains at a hospital called Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. I thought it a little un-kosher. As far as

which type of cells I feel will be the future, the possibility of stem cells dividing uncontrollably after transplant makes me think there might be some really undesirables side effects if they are used. Great, you got rid of some of the symptoms but now you have an uncontrollable brain tumor. I have also read that stem cells also have problems with rejection from the immune system, something the fetal pig cells didn't. Despite the gross thought of having fetal pig cells injected into your brain they seem to me to have shown the most promise.

Message no. 201[Branch from no. 198]
Posted by **Nicholas Williams** on Monday, April 25, 2005 8:41am
Subject: Re: Pork chops and curing Parkinson's

hahah that was pretty funny

Message no. 199
Posted by **Cathryn Hill** on Monday, April 25, 2005 2:29am
Subject: #2

Knowing the numerous side effects of the medications offered for Parkinson's, I believe that stem cell's and animal tissue's are an excellent alternative. Why wouldn't a person want to help thousands of other people by offering something that was going to be discarded anyways? This kind of research should be utilized for many diseases. As long as this research does not take cells from those (human or animal) that actually need it for themselves I am all for it.

Message no. 202
Posted by **Benjo Tumulak** on Monday, April 25, 2005 9:44am
Subject: discussion post #2

Discrete surgical brain lesions to treat the symptoms of Parkinson's disease had been widely used during the 1950s and 1960s. The low success rate and unacceptable side effects and complications of surgery as well as the introduction of levodopa seemed to abolish completely the need for surgery.

For several reasons, however, there is a renewed interest among the neurosurgical community about the surgical treatment of Parkinson's disease. Firstly, it became evident that pharmacological therapy, which is the current mainstay of the management of Parkinson's disease, is usually unsatisfactory in the long term. As the disease progresses, the efficacy of that treatment often decreases, and incapacitating bradykinesia, rigidity, tremor, and impairment of gait and balance are frequently observed. Furthermore, late-course deterioration is frequently associated with debilitating levodopa-induced dyskinesias and fluctuations in clinical response. Secondly, increased understanding of the physiology of the basal ganglia in health and disease has provided a scientific rationale to proceed with various neurosurgical strategies. Thirdly, significant improvements in neuro-imaging and neurosurgical techniques have made the surgical procedures safer and more accurate.

However, despite the improvements, most of the surgical approaches for the treatment of Parkinson's disease remain shrouded in controversy. This is partly because published outcomes show a great heterogenity in the response of patients to this kind of surgery, and partly because comparing the techniques is difficult since not many centers use all of the techniques. Furthermore, neurosurgery for Parkinson's disease carries risks - both perioperative and postoperative is an extremely difficult procedure even for the best multidisciplinary teams. Therefore, none of the surgical procedures that will be described can securely provide an effective treatment; lesioning, deep brain stimulation and transplantation are considered following resistance to pharmacological therapy. They are almost always second- line treatment options.

I would say that that future in treating Parkinson's disease doesn't rely on surgical implantations of any kind. If it can be treated well with Levodopa then might as well use it instead. As I've said surgical treatments are always second-line treatment option.

Message no. 203
Posted by **Sandra Spears** on Monday, April 25, 2005 10:54am
Subject: Post2- Jesus Picked His Nose

Well now that I have your attention. I belive that recent treatments for Parkinsons disease are very interesting. I think future treatments do lie with surgically implanting fetal or embroyonic stem cells. Maybe some people would think it would be morally wrong or gross, but I think the scientific research on this disease has progress greatly and will help many suffering from Parkinsons disease.

Future treatments and experiments with this disease will unleash many questions about morals and religon. Damn the man- If an aborted fetus can save the life of a dying man, so be it. If implanting animal cells is sucessful- great. I would pick science over religon

and morals anyday.

Message no. 210[Branch from no. 203]
Posted by **James Gregory** on Monday, April 25, 2005 12:31pm
Subject: Re: Post2- Jesus Picked His Nose

There were some scientists a ways back in the 1940s that also believed morals didn't play a role in science. They figured that the Jews and other "undesirables" were being killed anyway so what would be the harm in using them to further research. Long story short people were burned to death, frozen to death, poisoned, and had their brains dissected while they were still alive. Careful when you only take the possible benefits into account.

Message no. 206
Posted by **James Cunnigham** on Monday, April 25, 2005 11:13am
Subject: Discussion post 2

Parkinsons disease can greatly affect a person's life in negative ways. L-dopa is used to produce dopamine and counteract the symptoms of the disease. L-dopa only temporarily relieves or reduces the symptoms. I feel that sergical methods of transplanting brain tissue would be more efficient in the long run. first of all the side effects that L-dopa causes will not be a factor. second of all the stem cell transplants have more of a long term effect. The question that is debatable to me is whether to use fetal/embryotic human brain tissue or animal tissue. I am against using human tissue because it will affect the fetus that it is being taken from and i am against it morally. the cause is good and it will help the individual with parkinson's, but at the expense of another. on the contrary, using animal cells would have its downside because it is coming from an organism with a deferent make-up than a human. using cells from a pig has been effective, but also can cause disease and other negative effects. Comparing the two, using animal cells would probably be the more practical of the two because they are being genetically raised and watched for disease so that they can be used to transplant brain tissue into someone with parkinson's. As long as things are done correctly and the person is monitored and treated accordingly after the transplant, I believe that the future of treating Parkinson's lies in animal tissue, not human cells or the current method of using L-dopa

---

Download Close