

# CONNECTOR



LIFE ISSUES INSTITUTE, INC.  
SERVING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT

April 2005

## Dramatic Uses of Adult Stem Cells

By J.C. Willke, MD and Bradley Mattes

The biotech industry, liberal media and pro-abortion forces have created and maintained substantial public confusion on stem cells. Mostly, what we hear are the two words “stem cells.” Sometimes we hear about “embryonic stem cells.” We almost never hear about “adult stem cells.” Considerable media attention has been given to the California initiative authorizing three billion dollars for embryonic stem cell research. We have watched as other states, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, etc. attempt to appropriate tax funds for embryonic stem cell research in a stated attempt to “not lose their scientists to California.” And we certainly know of Nancy Reagan’s and the late Christopher Reeves’ support for embryonic stem cell research.

The reality of new scientific progress on stem cell research continues to flow across our desks, sometimes even weekly. There are reports from all over the world of new research using stem cells to probe the mysteries of life and specifically to find cures for human ailments and injuries. The field is alive with new discoveries happening every month. One consistent thing about all of these new reports is that they are about *adult* stem cells. To date, there have been no human successes in the use of *embryonic* stem cells. Yet, nearly all of what we hear from the so-called mainstream press and biotech industries is the promise of embryonic stem cell research.

Why is this? Are only a privileged few being told about the tremendous successes working with adult stem cells? It might almost seem so. Very few, if any, adult stem cell reports seem to find their way into the pages of our liberal newspapers or onto the lips of our liberal media. To help set the record straight,

quadruplegic. Both of them are now able to walk with braces, due to adult stem cells.

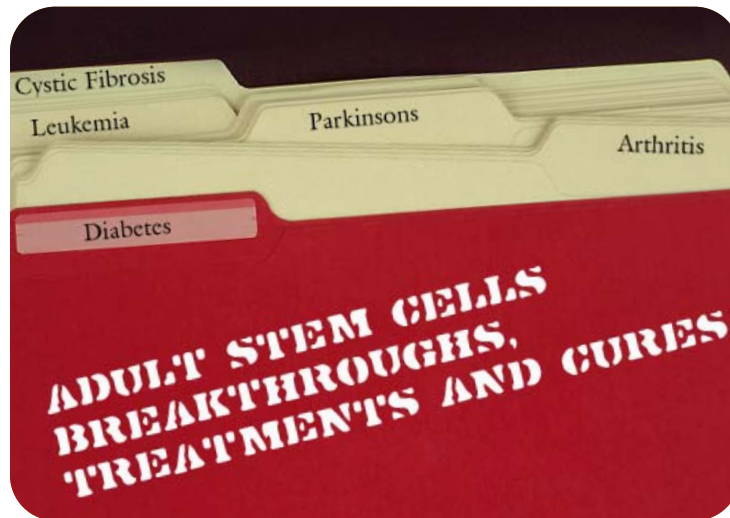
In South Korea a 20-year-old quadruplegic woman received transplanted umbilical cord stem cells to the site of her spinal injury. She’s now mobile with a walker.<sup>3</sup>

In Germany, stem cells have been used to help repair skull **bone** damage in a seven-year-old girl. Unlike other bones, skull bones do not regenerate, hence the use of metal plates to repair the damage. Using adult stem cells, the missing bone plates were replaced by thin, solid bone. Bits of the child’s own bones, mixed with adult stem cells, produced the healing.<sup>4</sup>

London researches have been using adult stem cells in trials to treat damaged livers. They hope to colonize and grow new **liver** cells allowing the liver to function again.<sup>5</sup>

In the US<sup>6</sup>, Germany<sup>7</sup>, Brazil<sup>8</sup> and France<sup>9</sup>, human patients have been treated

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we’ve briefly itemized some of the adult stem cell research that has come to our attention in the last year or two. Some of these are quite dramatic and very recent.

### *Breakthroughs, Treatments and Cures*

Scientists in Portugal<sup>1,2</sup> are using olfactory ensheathing glial cells from the lining of a patient’s nose to treat **spinal cord** injuries. Senator Brownback recently held a press conference where he introduced two young ladies, Susan and Laura, who were paralyzed, one a

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## Central America — Five Countries in Fifteen Days

This whirlwind trip was a five-nation tour of Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala. They all have laws against abortion. In two, these protections are enshrined in their constitutions. My wife, Barbara, and I lectured largely on the first week of life. This included fetal development, stem cells, cloning, emergency contraception and in vitro fertilization. In every case, one of their main concerns was emergency contraception and its abuse. With warm cooperation from pro-life workers as well as top government officials, we felt that our trip was extremely productive.

It began in the Honduras capital of Tegucigalpa, where we had our annual International Right to Life Federation board meeting. We welcomed our newly nominated member, William Saunders, representing the US. He is a long-time official at the Family Research Council and was appointed by President Bush to the US delegation to the UN.

After the board meeting, we spoke at a seminary to over 150 candidates for the priesthood. All board members took turns contributing and there were several media interviews. That night we had dinner courtesy of our hosts, Leonardo and Marta Casco-Fortin, with a variety of important officials, university professors, etc. The next day we had a lengthy meeting with the Health Minister and then on to the airport.

In Nicaragua, they kept us busy for an hour-and-a-half lecture, plus questions to leaders of their major charity, Caritas. The Bishop from Granada accepted a set of our four Spanish language one-minute radio spots, *Life Jewels*, containing 250 mini-messages. He assured me that he would make copies and have them aired daily on 30 stations across the country. This was repeated in all five countries. Again, we had several major speaking engagements. We also had a lengthy conference at their first pregnancy

help center with an impressive group of about 20 young ladies.

Next we flew to San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica. Here we had a happy reunion with Dr. Alejandro Lial, a young professor of genetics at C.R. University. We had worked with him 10 years ago in Rome. We went directly to a



*Dr. and Mrs. Willke with Marta and Leonardo Casco-Fortin*

Catholic TV station and recorded a full hour program. After this, we went to the College of Pharmacy. This included a lengthy discussion with the dean about abortive drugs and the nation's policy on their availability. Costa Rica's constitution protects the preborn baby from conception. Accordingly, there is substantial conflict about the sale of the "emergency contraception" pill. He will pass our literature on to all the medical students.

We went to another valuable meeting with the Minister of Health and Social Security, discussing the government's role in the above abortive drug. Girls can purchase it over-the-counter at this time, but our visit may stimulate action against it.

Then we met the UN ambassador from Costa Rica, who extended a hardy handshake. "We met, Doctor, ten years ago in Paris, at a large family-life meeting." I said, "At the palace of Versailles?" "Yes, but years before that when I got your first book." This sort of interchange has not

been unusual after lecturing in 74 countries. Twice his secretary interrupted our intense hour-long conversation with e-mails from the UN meeting going on in New York at the time. We thanked him warmly for Costa Rica's lead in the UN on pro-life issues.

We had brought five separate boxes of Spanish pro-life literature, recordings and radio discs — one box for each country. All of this was warmly welcomed.

In El Salvador, we were up early and had a one-hour radio interview, then off to a TV station for a half-hour taping before a quick breakfast and a one-and-a-half-hour lecture at a boy's school. After lunch, we led a question-and-answer period to a standing room only auditorium of 700 girls at a high school, then a 45-minute TV interview. That evening we spent two hours at a major meeting of an interesting high-level audience of doctors, lawyers, professors and other VIP-types. It was a good day.

The next morning, we went to the Central Catholic Office, where we met Monsignor Antall, an old friend. We then had three separate radio interviews, a two-hour lecture with questions, a 45-minute TV interview, two more radio interviews, another half hour on TV, more consultations and then an airbus to Guatemala City.

Our first interview the next morning was with the editor of *La Prensa*, Guatemala's largest newspaper with a three million circulation. As with most journalists on our trip, he spoke excellent English and was a very pro-life gentleman. From there we went to a lengthy interview with the Guatemalan Minister of Health. As with so many other officials we met, this gentleman was pro-life and anxious to receive the information we brought, particularly on the subject of emergency

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## Adult Stem Cells *continued from page 1*

with their own stem cells to regenerate **heart** muscle destroyed during a heart attack or injury. In most cases this was successful.

Twenty-three patients regained their eyesight following limbal (adult) stem cell transplants.<sup>10</sup> This treatment has helped many suffering from **blindness** for years, including victims of Iraqi mustard gas attacks.

Patients with **Crohn's** disease have apparently been cured after treatment with stem cells from their own blood.<sup>11</sup>

Ninety percent of 19 patients with various autoimmune disorders, such as systemic **lupus**, are in remission or have improved after treatment with their own blood stem cells.<sup>12</sup>

One patient with **multiple sclerosis** improved after being treated with adult stem cells from his own blood.<sup>13</sup>

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One study of **Parkinson's** patients showed an average improvement of sixty-one percent increase of coordination, as well as fewer symptoms after transplants of the patient's own neuronal stem cells.<sup>14</sup>

Doctors added adult stem cells from umbilical cord blood to the treatment of **leukemia** patients. This freed fourteen of eighteen patients of the disease.<sup>15</sup>

Hematopoietic stem cell transplants

successfully treated over two hundred **sickle cell** patients. The success rate has been eighty to eighty-five percent.<sup>16</sup>

A 52-year-old woman with **rheumatoid arthritis** in 38 joints was treated with adult stem cells from her sister. While still in the hospital, her morning stiffness ceased. One year later she is free of the disease and off medication.<sup>17</sup>

In **n s b r u c k**, Austria, doctors have used adult stem cells from patients' muscles to successfully treat urinary stress **incontinence**. Eighteen of twenty remain continent one year later.<sup>18</sup>

Researchers found that adult stem cells in the pulp of baby teeth may be extremely useful in growing replacement brain tissue to overcome stroke damage and other **neurological** disorders.<sup>19</sup>

**Chagas** disease is a potentially lethal parasitic condition attacking and destroying the heart and other tissue. It kills six million people worldwide every year. The parasite can be killed with treatment, but the damage remains. Now scientists in Buenos Aires, using adult stem cells from patients' own bone marrow, have been repairing heart damage.<sup>20</sup>

Scientists in New York are exploring the real possibility of using adult stem cells to regenerate **teeth** that have been removed.<sup>21</sup>

Toronto researchers reported finding adult stem cells not merely in umbilical cord blood, but also a "jackpot" of adult stem cells in the tissue mass (Warton's Jelly) surrounding the three umbilical cord blood vessels. They

anticipate using these adult stem cells to regrow bone and connective tissue in **knees** that have been damaged in an accident.<sup>22</sup>

In Argentina, stem cells from a **diabetic** patient's own bone marrow were fed into his pancreas through an artery. His glucose levels returned to normal with no need for medication.<sup>23</sup>



*Susan Fajt is able to walk again after being treated with her own stem cells.*

Pennsylvania and Louisiana scientists have coaxed adult stem cells from bone marrow to differentiate into the type of cells that line lungs and air passages. This may lead to effective treatments for **cystic fibrosis**.<sup>24</sup>

Adult stem cells hold a promise to treating baldness in humans. A study at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine reports using them to grow **hair** on bald mice.<sup>25</sup>

Chicago researchers are looking at a new adult stem cell technique that will replace implants for reconstructive surgery

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## Adult Stem Cells *continued from page 3*

and **body augmentation**. This could have profound commercial implications for cosmetic surgery.<sup>26</sup>

Many of the above studies are preliminary and several have been done in animal models, although many have been used in human trials. A single report of a success (e.g. of skull bone) is not considered official until other scientists replicate the same study. Then trials must succeed in human subjects using adult stem cells before such treatments will be available for you and your loved ones. This being said, however, we can hardly conceal our excitement at these new discoveries. Most of the above have been reported within the last year, with some much more recent. In stark contrast to this, we have no reports of such successes using embryonic stem cells.

### **Embryonic Stem Cells**

Objections to the use of embryonic stem cells are both medical and moral. The moral dimension is evident. The only way to obtain these cells is to directly kill a five-day-old living human embryo, cutting him or her open and extracting embryonic stem cells. From an ethical, moral standpoint, this alone should rule out their use.

Medically speaking, there are several major problems. One is this tissue is from another living human, with a different DNA and can be rejected just like a transplanted kidney. Another is that they can carry infection from the donors; a worse case would be AIDS. Finally, and most importantly, researchers have not discovered a way to regulate or target their growth, for they are "very plastic." They can uncontrollably grow into many types of cells. For instance, implanted embryonic stem cells have turned into bone, skin, kidney and other tissues when researchers had hoped they would turn into brain cells. This tendency for tumor formation has, as

of yet, been uncontrolled.

Can these problems be solved? That is the challenge scientists hope to solve if and when they are given free reign to kill human embryos and use these cells in unrestricted and usually lethal experimentation. Their hope is the curative value of embryonic stem cells might even exceed all of the above adult stem cell successes. This, however, is just a hope. A number of highly scientific experts in this field have predicted such hopes are pipe dreams and that embryonic stem cells will never be able to be harnessed for curative reasons.

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The above dim prospects are specifically the reason almost no private venture capital has been flowing into *embryonic* stem cell research, whereas, substantial amounts have been invested in the *adult* stem cell research.

Why then is there an almost exclusive push by liberal sources for embryonic stem cell research, and a near total blackout of the above adult stem cell successes? One reason is that killing five-day-old human embryos does not pose a problem for many scientists and certainly not for much of the media. If you can abort them before birth, you can snuff out their lives in a research lab. For scientists, the unknown is a challenge, a horizon that

needs to be explored. They want to boldly go where no man has gone before. Whether or not palatable results seem reasonably obtainable is irrelevant. Exploring the unknown is a goal in itself. They are, however, faced with the obvious fact that private money will not subsidize such questionable investigations. This is why there is tremendous pressure from scientists, the liberal media and, very clearly, a powerful and well-financed biotech industry to appropriate tax money for such research.

Our goal is to make more people aware of the obvious promise of adult stem cells. Pro-lifers should be in the forefront, telling the world the exciting possibilities of ethical adult stem cell research. Further, this should be contrasted with the fact that embryonic stem cell research is done by killing living humans in the very limited hope of someday helping another. 

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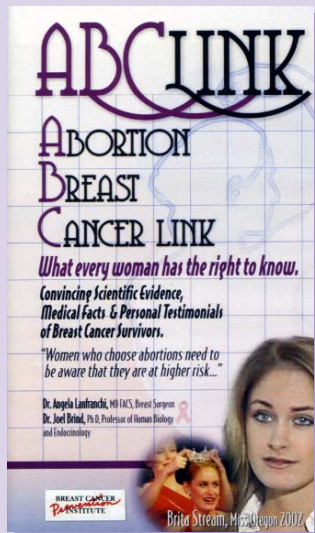
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## Now Available From Life Issues Institute!



Brita Stream, Miss Oregon of the 2002 Miss America Pageant, introduces three young women whose lives were forever changed after they developed breast cancer following their abortions. The information on this video will empower women to make informed choices for themselves and their children. Women who are at increased risk for breast cancer after abortion will learn about life-saving screening mammograms which can increase survival if breast cancer should develop.

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## Adult Stem Cells *continued from page 4*

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## Five Countries in Fifteen Days *continued from page 2*

contraception. After lunch, we spoke to a group of faculty members at an all-English school. Again, we used slides with a very lively interchange. From there it was back to the hotel and a long interview with the country's second largest newspaper. That evening we gave a full presentation at the home of one of our hosts. Again the guests were community leaders, professors and pro-life activists.

The next day we addressed a major conference at a girl's institute. The auditorium was jammed. We left posters and brochures, just as we did at other places.

We were then off to a radio-TV station, called the Family Christian Network, where we taped several programs.

We had been scheduled to meet the president of the Guatemalan Congress, but there was rioting around the capitol as the lawmakers were voting on a free trade agreement. Accordingly, we met with his secretary, the number two person. He evidenced grave concern over the abuse of

the emergency contraception pill. Guatemala protects unborn human life from conception. As a result, he had been told



*Dr. and Mrs. Willke at one of many press conferences.*

that it was not abortive. I believe that he will now put a label on these prescriptions and stop their over-the-counter sale. Finally, we did another lengthy newspaper interview.

So it went. At every major large meeting we used slides, using our own slide projector. In some areas, translation was not needed. In most, however, we used

concurrent translation. Everywhere, we met warm and enthusiastic cooperation, highly attentive students, and always, many questions.

At these meetings we passed out Spanish language editions of Life or Death, Did You Know, Eight-Week flyer, Stem Cell and other brochures, posters, Q and A books, video tapes, CDs and PowerPoint discs.

All in all, while it was an extremely crowded schedule, we felt that it would be difficult to think of a more productive two weeks in our life. We came home exhausted, but fulfilled.

The mission of Life Issues Institute is to change the hearts and minds of people through education. Clearly that was our goal during this latest trip. Our hope and prayer is that this newfound information in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala will be applied toward saving the lives of countless preborn children. 🌀

## New Board Member



*Jane B. Dugan*

Life Issues Institute is very pleased to welcome our latest member of the Board of Directors. Jane B. Dugan was born and raised near Savannah, Georgia, but has been a long-time resident of Cincinnati, Ohio. She is passionate about defending the lives of unborn babies and has a reputation for getting a job done right. Jane is married to Francis R. Dugan of Dugan and Meyers, a construction firm that has built some of Cincinnati's most recognized structures. They are both active in their church and are members of Legatus of Cincinnati, a Catholic organization of professional business people. Jane and Francis have nine children and fourteen grandchildren. Family is one of Jane's highest priorities. In addition, she and Francis find time for traveling around the world.





## From the Executive Director

Bradley Mattes

### ***Show and Tell at the Supreme Court***

The most important development this year affecting the welfare of unborn babies is Supreme Court vacancies. Court watchers predict Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, will attempt to serve out the remainder of the court's term and then retire. If the latest prediction is correct, we will see a vacancy about the end of June when the court's term traditionally ends.

It's impossible to overstate the Supreme Court's impact on the lives of preborn babies. In 1973, the Court circumvented the laws of most states that protected this vulnerable segment of society. It declared that abortion-on-demand, for any reason throughout pregnancy, was a right to privacy secured in the constitution. Since then, over forty-five million babies have died.

Because of the Court's action, state and federal legislators have been severely restricted in their ability to protect unborn babies and their parents from abortion. Under the makeup of the current Supreme Court, the welfare of millions more babies looks bleak.

That's why many pro-lifers voted to re-elect George W. Bush. They're aware of the power of the presidency in appointing judges to the courts, especially our nation's highest court. President Bush's track record on appointing pro-life judicial nominees has been outstanding. Unfortunately, pro-abortion Democrat Senators have led a filibuster against up or down votes on many of these sterling nominees. They have imposed a pro-abortion litmus test on the President and our nation.

A recent Supreme Court ruling dramatically underscores what type of justices should be on the Court, as well as who *shouldn't* be there now.

Last month, the Court ruled in *Roper vs. Simmons* that it was unconstitutional for a state to use the death penalty for murderers under eighteen years

of age. I'm NOT arguing for or against their ultimate decision. What I find alarming is *how* the majority came to their conclusion. It should also worry millions of people who think unborn babies should be protected from the violence of abortion.

The majority opinion was authored by Justice Anthony Kennedy, who made the case for their decision. He said it was necessary to refer to the "evolving standards of decency." Further, Kennedy wrote, "It is proper that we acknowledge the overwhelming weight of international opinion."

It will ultimately be devastating to our nation to have Supreme Court justices who, before ruling, first check with the prevailing opinion of European countries or rely on evolving standards of decency.


Justice Kennedy wrote that their decision is confirmed by the fact the US is the only country in the world allowing the death penalty for juveniles. What's his point? The Court's job isn't to stick its finger in the air and see which way the global political winds are blowing. Every justice took a solemn oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States. The constitution isn't a living, evolving document. It's carved in stone until the people, not judges, amend it.

Not everyone agreed with the majority's reasoning. Justice Antonin Scalia wrote the dissenting opinion. He noted that only 15 years ago the Court ruled capital punishment for juveniles *was* constitutional. Kennedy voted with the majority then. Scalia's point in bringing that up was this: How could the Court possibly decide that the constitution had changed? Directly relating to abortion, Scalia compared the Court's rulings against parental involvement laws protecting minors from abortion with *Roper*. He wrote, "Whether to obtain an abortion is surely a much more complex decision for a young person than whether to kill an innocent person in cold blood."

Scalia also wrote, "More fundamentally, however, the basic premise of the Court's argument — that American law should conform to the laws of the rest of the world — ought to be rejected out of hand. What these foreign sources 'affirm,' rather than repudiate, is the Justices' own notion of how the world out to be." He ended his dissent with this final thought, "'Updating' the Eighth Amendment as needed, destroys stability and makes our case law an unreliable basis for the designing of laws...and for action by public officials."

It's tragically ironic that 4 of the 5 justices who ruled capital punishment was "cruel and unusual punishment" for juveniles, previously ruled that death by partial-birth abortion for *preborn* juveniles was acceptable. If pulling an unborn child feet-first from her mother's womb and sucking out her brains doesn't fit the description of "cruel and unusual," nothing will.

Again, I'm not advocating one way or another regarding the Court's decision in *Roper*. I take exception to *how* the majority came to this conclusion. If the Supreme Court looks to Europe for direction on abortion as it did in this case, unborn babies don't stand a chance. I know from many visits "across the pond," their laws reflect a mostly pro-abortion population.

Now that you've seen a glimpse of this basic philosophy from different members of the Court, consider this: President Bush said he would appoint Supreme Court justices who will strictly interpret the constitution, not legislate from the bench. The President has often cited Justice Scalia as a model justice. *Roper vs. Simmons* provides us an excellent opportunity to understand possibly why a majority of the justices are pro-abortion, and how important the President's criteria are for future Court appointments. 



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Life Issues Institute has experienced a growing number of men and/or their partners looking for someone to talk with about their abortion experience. More crisis pregnancy centers and churches are urgently needed to begin a ministry to America's forgotten fathers.

It's easier than you might think to get an outreach to men going in your community.



Now, free resources to help these hurting men are also only a click away. Go to [www.lifeissues.org](http://www.lifeissues.org) and click on "Men

and Abortion." Then click on "resources." You will find a manual called *Forgotten Fathers* to teach others how to counsel men who have lost a child to abortion. In addition, there is also a corresponding Bible study called *Missing Arrows* to take a man through the healing process. Both resources have been developed by Warren Williams, one of the nation's leading experts and counselors on the issue of men and abortion.

Both resources can be downloaded for free. In addition, you may make as many copies as you need. Our goal is to get these valuable tools into the hands of those willing to reach out to hurting men. Additional resources are listed on the website.

If you have any questions, contact Bradley Mattes at Life Issues Institute, 513.729.3600 or [info@lifeissues.org](mailto:info@lifeissues.org). 