Researchers identify stem cells responsible for tissue repair

The skin, which is an essential barrier that protects our body against the external environment, undergoes constant turnover throughout life to replace dead cells that are constantly sloughed off from the skin surface. During adult life, the number of cells produced must exactly compensate for the number of cells lost. Different theories have been proposed to explain how this delicate balance is achieved. In a new study published in Nature, researchers lead by Pr. Cédric Blanpain, MD/PhD, FNRS/FRS researcher and WELBIO investigator at the IRIBHM, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium, in collaboration with Pr. Benjamin Simons, University of Cambridge, UK, demonstrate the existence of a new population of stem cells that give rise to progenitor cells that ensure the daily maintenance of the epidermis and demonstrate the major contribution of epidermal stem cells during wound healing.

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