

Desperate patients seek stem cell miracles, but scientists warn of hidden dangers

Boca Raton parents Gary and Judy Susser say they know the hope and promise of stem-cell therapy. Nine years ago they traveled to Mexico for stem cell injections for their son Adam, who has cerebral palsy.

"Maybe it will do some good," Gary Susser said he and his wife thought at the time. They spent \$25,000.

But the Sussers stopped stem cell injections in 2005, after spending about \$25,000 and seeing no improvement. Now armed with more information, the Sussers are grateful the treatments didn't harm Adam, now 12. While they are advocates of "responsible" stem cell research, they warn other parents against making trips to Costa Rica, Mexico, Russia or other offshore clinics for experimental treatments.

With promising breakthroughs making the news, as well as Internet hype, desperate parents and seriously ill patients may look to stem-cell therapy as the modern miracle that could cure them. And one day, stem cells may be routinely used to repair damaged cells, improve the treatment of diseases and even cure paralysis.

But there are hidden dangers to today's stem cell treatments, both in the U.S. and offshore, scientists said at the recent World Stem Cell Summit in West Palm Beach.

View the original article here: Desperate patients seek stem-cell 'miracle,' but scientists warn of hidden dangers