

Stem cells in Texas: Cowboy culture

The following is an excerpt.

By offering unproven therapies, a Texas biotechnology firm has sparked a bitter debate about how stem cells should be regulated.

For the past decade, [patients] have searched far and wide for clinics offering to deliver on the promise of adult stem cells. Unlike embryonic stem cells, their use does not require the controversial destruction of an embryo. Yet although adult stem cells are claimed to ameliorate a wide range of disorders, they have not yet been shown to do so conclusively in clinical trials in the United States. Relying on customer testimonies and company promises, patients have travelled to clinics in places such as China, Costa Rica, Mexico and Japan to receive them from unregulated, often unaccredited, laboratories, driving a boom in stem-cell tourism. According to Leigh Turner, a bioethicist at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, at least ten clinics offer treatments in the United States. Turner and others have questioned the quality of the cells that these firms provide, and several outlets have been forced to stop providing treatments.

View the original article here: [Stem cells in Texas: Cowboy culture](#)