

Growing mini-brains: What are the ethical concerns?

You've probably already heard about the miniature 'human brain' grown in laboratory.

The research, involving the growth of cerebral 'organoids' from human stem cells, was published in Nature on Wednesday. For some good coverage of the science behind this work, see Ed Yong's piece [here](#) and the FAQ [here](#).

It's not hard to see why these little blobs have attracted a lot of media attention. It's a remarkable technique, although growing brain cells in culture is not new. Such 'brains in a dish' have been around for some time.

What's new here is that these organoids grew in 3D, and – all by themselves – started to differentiate into rudimentary brain regions.

Incredible. But is it ethical?

Read the full, original story here: [“The Ethics of ‘Mini Human Brains’”](#)

Additional resources:

- [“Stem cells mimic human brain,”](#) Nature News
- [“10 Reasons Why Growing A Human Brain-in-a-Dish is Terrific,”](#) PLOS