

Virus adopted into human DNA may play roll in stem cell pluripotency

McGill Computational Biology Professor Guillaume Bourque suggests in a new paper just published in Nature Structural & Molecular Biology that the production and operation of stem cells in primates are heavily dependent on endogenous virus genes from the human endogenous retrovirus subfamily H (HERV-H).

HERV-H has been known for some time to be viral DNA — not originally from eukaryotic evolution. But it was thought to be mere “junk” as most endogenous viral genes were long dismissed as. But Professor Bourque has shown that HERV-H expression plays a critical role in keeping embryonic stem cells in humans pluripotent.

Read the full, original story: [Primate Stem Cell Creation Appears Driven by Genes From Ancient Virus](#)