

Teeth of the very old may provide more easily accessible stem cells than blood

Normally, I wouldn't post about a report that's already reverberated through the blogosphere, but the finding of hundreds of mutations in the blood of a 115-year-old woman reminded me of something I'd published a few years ago. In an actual journal. And at least in the accounts I read, no one linked the finding to mutation detection in clinical genome sequencing.

In 2008, Renad I. Zhdanov, a researcher at the Institute of Fundamental Medicine and Biology at the Russian Academy of Sciences, started emailing me, about stem cells. I'd just published a tome for Insight Pharma Reports and a highly forgettable novel on the topic.

Dr. Zhdanov had the idea to use stem cells from the teeth of the oldest old to create spare parts for others. Presumably the cells, having hung around for more than a century, would have exceptional potential. When our discussion veered toward the concept of informed consent — yanking teeth from unsuspecting elders — I realized we could write an editorial for the American Journal of Bioethics, where I had a contact. And so “Centenarians as Stem Cell Donors” appeared in the November 2009 issue.

Read the full, original story: [Mutations in 115-Year-Old Provide Perspective for Personal Genome Sequencing](#)