

Will genetically modifying embryos create real life dystopia?

Citing safety fears for babies, genetics researchers called for a halt to experiments that would alter the DNA of human sperm, eggs, and embryos.

The moratorium [plea](#), published in the journal *Nature*, suggests that genetic modification of babies is right around the corner, and may lead to a dystopian future not unlike the 1997 movie *Gattaca*.

“Human beings are not lab rats, just another species to improve,” Edward Lanphier, chairman of the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine, told BuzzFeed News.

The alliance represents more than 170 research firms, institutes, and patient groups advocating for federal support of Alzheimer’s, spinal cord, and brain injury treatments.

“A fundamental barrier would be crossed that everyone should have a chance to weigh here,” said Lanphier, who led the call for the halt.

Lanphier and his co-authors, including his colleague Fyodor Urnov of the biotech firm Sangamo BioSciences, are not against all so-called “gene editing” experiments. They applaud using the technology to treat diseases, such as HIV, sickle cell anemia, and cancer. Those efforts rely on genetic editing of immune cells to fight diseases, alterations that would not be passed along to the offspring of patients. (Sangamo, for example, just [launched a clinical trial](#) that will tweak the genes of people with HIV.)

What Lanphier and his colleagues want to stop are genetic tweaks to human embryos that would forever alter the DNA of babies in every cell of their bodies, and that might be used for cosmetic, not medical, reasons, with uncertain effects passed along to future generations.

Read full, original article: [Scientists Call For Moratorium On Human Genetic Experiments](#)