

Do major medical advances justify stem cell research with aborted fetuses?

Stem cell science is a big deal in California, thanks to the Institute for Regenerative Medicine, a state agency that has allocated almost \$2 billion in research grants since 2004 (federal funding is still highly restricted). To meet the demand for cells, researchers turned to a procedure protected by federal law: abortions.

The use of fetal tissue in research is not new. Fetal cells extracted from the lungs of two aborted fetuses from Europe in the 1960s are still being propagated in cell culture. They're so successful that today we still use them to produce vaccines for [hepatitis A](#), [rubella](#), [chickenpox](#) and shingles. From two terminated pregnancies, countless lives have been spared.

It isn't just vaccines. Scientists at the [University of California](#), San Diego, have injected neural stem cells into two patients to treat their spinal cord injuries. And progress is being made in the use of stem-cell therapies against [cancer](#), [blindness](#), Alzheimer's, heart disease, [H.I.V.](#) and [diabetes](#).

As impressive as this is, for critics the lives saved cannot make up for those that have been lost. And as important as I believe my research was, I sympathize with that sense of loss, even after leaving the lab for Boston.

Every week when new fetal tissue was delivered in a FedEx box, uneasiness permeated the lab. We all knew that the tissues contained within were precious. We planned our experiments meticulously, trying not to waste a single drop. We rationalized using the cells by telling one another that the abortions would happen regardless of whether we used the tissue for research. And we knew that if we didn't use the tissue it was bound for the trash.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [The Case for Fetal-Cell Research](#)