

## Murky world of stem cell tourism ensnares hopeful patients

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

When Jim Gass suffered a stroke in 2009, it soon was clear that standard rehabilitation would not repair the damage. Unwilling to accept life in a wheelchair, Gass decided his only option was to fly overseas for experimental stem cell treatment.

At clinics in Argentina, China, and Mexico, doctors injected Gass with what they described as stem cells from several sources, including fetal tissue, in attempts to reverse his partial paralysis. Clinics tout the treatments online as cutting edge and curative.

What happened to Gass next is a cautionary tale for other desperate patients seeking unproven and unregulated treatments in the murky world of “stem cell tourism,” warned a group of Brigham and Women’s Hospital doctors in a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine.

After scans showed something unfamiliar on Gass’s spine, where the latest round of stem cells had been injected, a Brigham doctor discovered a strange sticky fibrous growth there. Now Gass is more disabled than he was prior to stem cell therapy.

**Read full, original post:** [He went abroad for stem cell treatment. Now he’s a cautionary tale.](#)