

## Canadian researchers can't use CRISPR in human embryo research

In the United States, using genetic engineering techniques such as CRISPR to make genetic alterations that can be passed on to future generations is illegal, but scientists are still allowed to conduct experiments that include genetically altering embryos, so long as those embryos never have the chance to become babies.

In Canada, though, even basic research that might be categorized as “germline editing” risks a hefty fine or up to 10 years in prison. Now Canadian scientists and ethicists have [joined forces](#) to speak out against the prohibition and its damaging impact on Canadian science.

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Standing in the way of Canadian scientists is a section of Canada's [Assisted Human Reproduction Act](#), a set of laws forged in the aftermath of advancements in stem cell research, the Human Genome Project and Dolly the Sheep, as the public worried about scenarios like human cloning. The law makes it a criminal act to alter the genome of a cell or embryo in such a way that the change might be transmitted to descendants.

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Allowing germline editing even just for research though, would likely require an act of Parliament to change Canadian federal law. A statement from Canada's health ministry, though, might allow a reinterpretation of the existing law that could pave the way for Canadian scientists to do some CRISPR research in embryos.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [This Outdated Law Makes CRISPR Illegal in Canada – and That's Hurting Science](#)**