

Viewpoint: Call for moratorium on heritable gene editing reminds us of gene therapy's troubled early days

A group of influential scientists have urged that clinical use of CRISPR be put on hold in the wake of the Chinese gene-edited baby debacle. ...

Writing in the journal *Nature*, [CRISPR specialists from seven countries called for a moratorium on heritable genome editing and the need for an international governance framework](#). ...

The global moratorium refers specifically to changes in “heritable DNA (in sperm, eggs or embryos) to make genetically modified children” according to the *Nature* article....

The recent move is reminiscent of a historic precedent involving gene therapy that occurred in the 1970s and became a cautionary tale among geneticists.

[A] group of experts ... [introduced a set of guidelines for safely handling recombinant organisms](#) without endangering public health. The scientific community embraced the guidelines which facilitated the acceptance of recombinant genetic techniques over the next few years.

Despite best intentions, tragedy occurred in 1999 when a young patient died from organ failure following over-administration of a genetically engineered virus meant to correct an enzyme defect. The [FDA suspended gene therapy research](#) using human subjects pending the review of ethical and procedural processes. Eventually the field of gene therapy rebounded but it took years of oversight and collaborative work.

Read full, original post: [Call For CRISPR Moratorium Echoes Early Days Of Gene Therapy](#)