

## Japanese researchers gain approval for 'basic research' on gene-edited human embryos

A government research panel specializing in life ethics approved the modification of genes from fertilized human eggs for basic research to treat genetic diseases.

As of now, however, the panel will not allow births with gene-modified fertilized eggs due to safety and ethical considerations.

The panel's decision will pave the way for research that could start in spring next year at the earliest into ways to correct genetic defects.

Genome editing to repair gene abnormalities in fertilized eggs is aimed at preventing genetic defects from being passed down through generations.

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At least 12 cases are known in the United States, China and elsewhere, where genome editing was done on fertilized eggs. In about half of the cases, the intention was to prevent intractable and other diseases.

"People will welcome genome editing of fertilized eggs if it prevents genetic diseases," said an expert who took part in the research panel's discussions. "Basic research must be carried out. Otherwise, there is little possibility of being able to alter genes with total accuracy."

If the research reaches the stage of practical use, regulating gene manipulation will likely prove to be the next big hurdle.

**Read full, original post:** Panel permits gene editing using fertilized human eggs