

Another CRISPR controversy brews as Russian scientist announces plans to produce gene-edited babies

A Russian scientist says he is planning to produce gene-edited babies, an act that would make him only the second person known to have done this. It would also fly in the face of the scientific consensus that such experiments should be banned until an international ethical framework has agreed on the circumstances and safety measures that would justify them.

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The experiment will target the same gene, called CCR5, that He [Jiankui] did, but [Denis] Rebrikov claims his technique will offer greater benefits, pose fewer risks and be more ethically justifiable and acceptable to the public. Rebrikov plans to disable the gene, which encodes a protein that allows HIV to enter cells, in embryos that will be implanted into HIV-positive mothers, reducing the risk of them passing on the virus to the baby in utero.

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According to Rebrikov he already has an agreement with an HIV centre in the city to recruit women infected with HIV who want to take part in the experiment.

But scientists and bioethicists contacted by Nature are troubled by Rebrikov's plans.

"The technology is not ready," says [molecular biologist and CRISPR pioneer] Jennifer Doudna.

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"It is not surprising, but it is very disappointing and unsettling."

Read full, original post: [Russian biologist plans more CRISPR-edited babies](#)