

Human-animal chimeric embryos in Japan: Growing human pancreas in a rat, suitable for transplant

The Japanese government is granting its support to a scientist working to create animal embryos that contain human cells, and to then subsequently transplant them into surrogate animals. The decision reverses one made earlier this year, which banned the procedure.

Scientist Hiromitsu Nakauchi wants to create a human pancreas in rodents like rats and mice, and the Japanese government, specifically its education and science ministry, has [issued new guidelines](#).

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The procedure would create human-animal chimeric embryos. Scientists created a [pig/human chimeric embryo](#) in 2017 and a [sheep/human hybrid](#) in 2018. If everything went to plan, Nakauchi would grow a human pancreas suitable for transplant.

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An experiment like Nakauchi's has never been attempted in Japan, and according to the Asahi Shimbun, the new guidelines only allow the research "on the precondition that researchers take appropriate steps to prevent the birth of an ambiguous creature that could be part human."

But Nakauchi says that wouldn't happen.

"The number of human cells grown in the bodies of sheep is extremely small, like one in thousands or one in tens of thousands," he said. "At that level, an animal with a human face will never be born."

Read full, original post: [I Guess You Can Grow a Human Pancreas In a Rat Now](#)