

## \$1 million for anti-aging gene therapy? ‘Dubious’ treatment raises ethical concerns

Would you pay \$1 million and fly to South America for a chance to live longer?

Libella Gene Therapeutics, a Kansas-based company that says it is developing a gene therapy that can reverse aging by up to 20 years, is hoping your answer is yes. In an interview with OneZero, the company says it is ready to give an experimental anti-aging therapy to older people at a clinic north of Bogota, Colombia. But that’s not all — it’s also charging people \$1 million to participate. Scientists and ethicists say the company’s experiment is not only dubious but it also raises concerns about how [anti-aging](#) treatments should be tested in people.

The aim of Libella’s therapy is to lengthen a person’s telomeres, which sit at the tips of chromosomes like caps on the end of shoelaces.

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[T]elomeres have been linked to aging because they seem to shorten as a person gets older. By delivering a gene called TERT to cells, which in turn makes a telomere-rebuilding enzyme called telomerase, Libella thinks it can prevent, delay, or even reverse aging.

“I know what we’re trying to do sounds like science fiction, but I believe it’s a science reality,” [says CEO] Jeff Mathis.

**Read full, original post:** [Scientists Dodge FDA to Offer a \\$1 Million Anti-Aging Treatment in Colombia](#)