



Adult stem cells hold great promise

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I have good news for Gary Kent (letter to the editor, Aug. 9) who is hoping for cures for family diseases.

In a recent article from the July/August issue of Choose Life, it is reported that adult stem cells have been successfully used to treat spinal cord injury, heart failure, Parkinson's disease and diabetes. Dr. Michelle Cretella, spokeswoman for the American College of Pediatricians (ACP) explained "non-embryo sources of stem cells such as amniotic fluid, umbilical cord blood, placenta and adult blood fat and various organs have yielded impressive results. Certain forms of cancer therapy now routinely use adult stem cells."

She further explained that where adult stem cell treatments have been successful "this has not been the case with any embryonic stem cell trial. Instead, there have been catastrophic results with these cells producing the wrong tissue, forming tumors and triggering immune rejection. Every dollar spent on the failed and unnecessary process of embryonic stem cell research steals resources away from the established utility and potential of adult stem cell research. This is fiscally irresponsible and medically unconscionable."

The article also states that "Scientists in Brazil found that adult stem cell treatments helped 14 of 15 diabetes patients become insulin free. This is great news for the millions of Americans who suffer from diabetes."

The ACP calls for state and federal funding of adult stem cell research.

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