

# Japan to learn cloning skills from S.Korea

July 19 2005

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Japan will study South Korea's legal guidelines on embryonic stem cell research for "therapeutic cloning" to shape its policy on the morally challenging issue.

South Korea is at the forefront of research into therapeutic cloning -- using embryonic stem cells to find cures for such ailments as Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries and juvenile diabetes, the Asahi Shimbun reported Tuesday.

The cells, which may someday be used to produce human "spare-part" tissue, are the next frontier in regenerative medicine.

Japan's government hopes to build on South Korean research in compiling its own guidelines on embryonic stem cell uses.

The ministry is inviting South Korean researchers to an experts' workshop in late July to discuss progress made in this field and to exchange ideas.

Japan, like many other nations, has banned human cloning, but the government's Council for Science and Technology Policy decided last year to permit stem cell creation for therapeutic research aimed at finding cures for diseases.

The guidelines will cover such issues as how to obtain unfertilized eggs and what diseases can be researched using this method.

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