

Stem- cell research ethics revision urged

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University of California-San Francisco scientists are urging a revision of stem-cell research ethics in advance of using the procedure to treat disease.

Writing in the current on-line issue of the journal *Stem Cells*, members of UCSF's Campus Advisory Committee on Human Gamete, Embryo and Stem-Cell Research say current practices must be amended to promote both the safety and well-being of patients who participate in clinical trials and the confidentiality of people who donate the embryos, oocytes and sperm that contribute to the development of embryonic stem cells.

The first author of the paper, Dr. Bernard Lo, a UCSF professor of medicine and director of the UCSF Program in Medical Ethics, wrote: "Lack of attention to these concerns could lead to delays of clinical trials in some cases and inappropriate clinical practices in others. Such developments, in turn, could undermine or delay progress toward stem-cell therapies."

The recommendations are aimed at ensuring the safety of donated biological materials, protecting the privacy of donors, and promoting effective communication between clinician-researchers and patients about the nature of early stage clinical trials.

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