

S. Korean scientists to try monkey cloning

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A team led by a South Korean scientist said it would soon attempt to perform the world's first cloning of a monkey.

"We are working on the mechanism of stimulating female monkey ovulation to gain eggs en masse, the minimal-must for cloning," team leader Chang Kyu-tae, of the Korea National Primate Research Center, said Wednesday. "After related regulations are set, we will begin cloning attempts with monkeys next year."

Chang said the team hopes to be successful in 2008, the Korea Times said.

The scientist said his team was cautious about its attempt because monkey cloning is important for developing an animal model that parallels human biology and can be used for preclinical tests in a number of areas.

Scientists have cloned domestic animals, including sheep and dogs, Chang said, but the reproductive cloning of monkeys has not been achieved.

In 2004, a U.S. scientist was reportedly close to cloning a monkey when his team cultured embryos to the blastocyst stage.

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