

“Your Position Against Stem Cell Research Disregards Diabetics”

I know that you don't think it's right to use stem cells and you have that right, it's granted to you in the constitution. But do you have diabetes? Do you know what it's like to have to get blood 4 times a day to know what your blood sugar is so that you can make good decisions so you don't die and every time you get in a car to drive? Then have to stick a needle into your skin to give yourself insulin to survive because your body does not produce insulin anymore. Do you know what that's like? Do you? The way I see it from your webpage you're not looking at the 16 million Americans with diabetes that have to live with this. If the stem cell research was to succeed then there would be no more Diabetes, Parkinson's and many other diseases.

I appreciate your passion for a desire to cure diabetes. It is a difficult disease, and I am sorry to learn that you suffer from it. However, allow me to reframe the argument.

We need to make a distinction between embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells. We have no problem with using adult stem cells to research treatment and cures of disease. What if embryonic stem cell research *doesn't* succeed? There are no guarantees. We haven't even cured a mouse, let alone treated any human disease with embryonic stem cells. Then we have will have wasted thousands of human embryos for nothing. Not to mention all the women who had to endure hormonal treatments to obtain their eggs to make the embryos. How much is their sacrifice worth to you?

What if adult stem cell research (research with no ethical questions and much hope of success) achieves a treatment before embryonic stem cell research? Again, we will have wasted thousands of human embryos for nothing.

I have a genetic disease myself, hemochromatosis, excess iron in the blood and organs. When left untreated it can lead to liver disease and cancer. I simply need a pint of blood withdrawn every 2-3 months to keep my iron levels under control. This is not the inconvenience of diabetes. But I am not without understanding of the issues. My health and convenience is not worth the sacrifice of human embryos who have no option of informed consent. I refuse to sacrifice the next generation in any way for my convenience. It's always been the other way around, the current generation sacrificing for the next.

You are also entitled to your opinion. But don't assume I have callously tossed aside the suffering of others. I simply choose the life of human embryos, embryos who have every potential to form a human being if left in their natural surroundings, over my convenience. To suggest that these early embryos are simply reproductive cells like sperm and egg is disingenuous and medically incorrect.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin
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