

# Cloner proposes genetic altering

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A British scientist who helped produce the world's first cloned mammal proposes creating cloned babies genetically altered to prevent hereditary disease.

Edinburgh University Professor Ian Wilmut, who helped create Dolly -- a sheep cloned from an adult cell -- argues in his forthcoming book "After Dolly" society should consider cloning with genetic modification to stop serious hereditary diseases, the London Telegraph reported.

Wilmut argues cloning an IVF embryo consisting of 100 or so cells is not the same as cloning a human.

The resulting child would be the identical twin of the original embryo, but would have the diseased gene corrected in every one of its cells, the newspaper said. The original embryo would be discarded.

"However," he said, "an early embryo is not a person and I see the use of nuclear transfer to prevent a child's having a dreadful disease as far less controversial.

"The use of genetic and reproductive technologies is not a step backward into darkness, but a step forward into the light," he said.

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