

Scalp tissue might become stem cell source

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U.S. researchers have isolated a new source of adult stem cells in scalp tissue that might be able to differentiate into several cell types.

University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine scientists say if their research proves to be safe and effective in animal and human studies, it might eventually provide the tissue needed for treating such disorders and peripheral nerve disease, Parkinson's disease and spinal cord injury.

"We are very excited about this new source of adult stem cells that has the potential for a variety of applications," said senior author Dr. Xiaowei Xu, an assistant professor of pathology. "A number of reports have pointed to the fact that adult stem cells may be more flexible in what they become than previously thought, so we decided to look in the hair follicle bulge, a niche for these cells."

Xu and colleagues report their findings in the *American Journal of Pathology*.

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