

Digging into new ethical issues around stem cells

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Discussions concerning to the ethical issues related to stem cells have been ongoing for many years, but a special section in the latest issue of [*Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*](#) takes a deep look at some of the newest and most complex issues—including the direct global sales of services and untested and unproven products marketed as stem cells.

Guest edited by Tamra Lysaght and Jeremy Sugarman, the special section on Ethics, Policy, and Autologous Cellular Therapies in [Volume 61, Issue 1](#) includes six essays that examine the potential impacts of using a person's own stem cells on patients, health-care systems and the public trust in science and [medicine](#).

"Many scholars in bioethics, law, medicine, philosophy, sociology and stem cell science worry such practices will place patients at risk of unnecessary harm and exploit vulnerable populations with unsubstantiated claims of clinical benefit," says Lysaght, Assistant Professor in the Centre for Biomedical Ethics at the National University of Singapore.

The issue developed from a symposium held in Singapore in May 2017. The symposium was a collaboration between the Centre for Biomedical Ethics at the National University of Singapore, the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, the Sydney Law School and the Stem Cell Society, Singapore.

The issue will be available for free on Project MUSE for a limited time.

The journal is published by the Johns Hopkins University Press.

"Many of the bioethical and regulatory issues related to autologous stem [cells](#) remain under examined. We planned the symposium to help fill the gap in research and are proud to release a series of peer-reviewed papers that resulted in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, says Sugarman, the Harvey M. Meyerhoff Professor of Bioethics and Medicine, at the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics.

Following an introductory essay written by [Lysaght and Sugarman](#), the issue features the work of Leigh Turner (["The US Direct-to-Consumer Marketplace for Autologous Stem Cell Interventions"](#)), Douglas Sipp (["Challenges in the Regulation of Autologous Stem Cell Interventions in the United States"](#)), Christopher Hauskeller (["Between the Local and the Global: Evaluating European Regulation of Stem Cell Regenerative Medicine"](#)), Tsung-Ling Lee and Tamra Lysaght (["Conditional Approvals for Autologous Stem Cell-Based Interventions: Conflicting Norms and Institutional Legitimacy"](#)), Tereza Hendl (["Vulnerabilities and the Use of Autologous Stem Cells for Medical Conditions in Australia."](#)) and Wendy Lipworth, Cameron Stewart and Ian Kerridge (["The Need for Beneficence and Prudence in Clinical Innovation with Autologous Stem Cells"](#)).

"This group of papers shows the importance of a journal like *Perspectives*," says editor Martha Montello, Lecturer on Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School. "We're proud of our ability to further public policy debates about challenging ethical issues and regulatory concerns through outstanding peer-reviewed papers like these."

Provided by Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

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