

## Biologists want to drop the word 'cloning'

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Don't say cloning, say somatic cell nuclear transfer. That at least is the view of biologists who want the term to be used instead of "therapeutic cloning" to describe the technique that produces cloned embryos from which stem cells can then be isolated. This, they argue, will help to distinguish it from attempts to clone a human being.

But will it? Kathy Hudson and her colleagues at the Genetics and Public Policy Center in Washington DC asked more than 2000 Americans whether they approved of deriving stem cells from embryos produced by cloning. For half of the sample they used the term "SCNT" instead of "cloning", and this raised approval ratings from 29 per cent to 46 per cent, Hudson told a meeting of the American Society of Human Genetics in New Orleans last week.

SCNT would also be used in any attempt to clone a human being, so Hudson also asked about creating babies using SCNT. This too raised the approval rate from 10 per cent to 24 per cent - which is not what scientists had in mind.

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