

Unilever's position on: Research with stem cells

There are several types of stem cell and it is important to distinguish between those derived from humans, other animals and plants as well as between adult, embryonic and induced pluripotent stem cells (generated artificially via reprogramming of adult cells).

Background

Stem cells have indefinite self-renewing capacity and are the only cells to be active throughout our entire life. They divide and differentiate into many different types of cells.

Given their unique regenerative abilities, stem cells offer many potential therapeutic benefits (in areas such as leukaemia, Parkinson's disease and the repair of damaged tissues) and health/beauty benefits.

They are important research tools used to model aspects of human biology (such as skin biology and hair biology) that are difficult to study in detail by other means. They are also used to investigate the effects of ingredients on specific biological processes.

Unilever's position

We do not undertake any research with embryonic stem cells. We support research with adult human stem cells and plant stem cells only.

We conduct all our research and innovation responsibly, in full compliance with the highest safety, ethical, legal and regulatory standards and requirements.

We work in partnership with leading scientific experts to investigate the potential applications of stem cell technology, including health and beauty benefits for consumers.