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New Video Describes Stem Cell Approach to Arthritis Treatment

Rewinding the Arthritis Clock Using the Earthworm's Secret

Frederick, Maryland--- January 22, 2010--- When an earthworm is cut in half, it will regenerate a new half. The reason may be the key to unlocking the “Fountain of Youth” for those who suffer from osteoarthritis.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis and affects almost 30 million Americans. It is caused by the wearing away of cartilage, the “gristle” that caps the ends of long bones. Although current therapies, which include pain killers, cortisone shots, and lubricant injections, can help with symptoms, they do not grow new cartilage.

Specialists such as [Nathan Wei, MD](#), have developed procedures that harness the power of stem cells and platelet-rich plasma, also known as PRP, to help heal and potentially rebuild new cartilage.

Stem cells are cells that haven't yet differentiated into a specific organ type. While embryonic stem cells have garnered much of the attention in the news to date, it is adult stem cells that are currently being used in much of the arthritis research.

According to Dr. Wei, “Stem cells are pluripotential, meaning they have the ability to become any type of tissue, depending on the environment in which they are placed. We are using them to try and rebuild worn cartilage in patients who have osteoarthritis in the hips and knees.”

“Since we use ‘autologous’ stem cells, meaning a patient’s own stem cells, we avoid many of the potential ethical, as well as other concerns such as cancer, that can accompany the use of embryonic stem cells,” Dr. Wei states.

“Using careful ultrasound guidance, we are able to harvest stem cells efficiently and also place them exactly where they’ll do the most good,” Dr. Wei adds.

Unfortunately, many people with osteoarthritis aren't aware of the new osteoarthritis research using stem cells... plus there's a lot of misinformation about stem cells out there as well. That's why we've created two videos, entitled “What you need to know about stem cells.” It explains what and how we do the procedure in detail. It's located at: <http://www.screencast.com/t/MzM3Y2U3ZmU> .

“I believe the ability to regenerate and heal damaged and diseased cartilage using autologous stem cells is going to usher in a new era in arthritis care,” concludes Dr. Wei.

Dr. Wei is a board-certified rheumatologist and a regenerative medicine specialist who practices in Frederick, Maryland.

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Journalists, newsletter publishers, bloggers, and others: You may reprint any or all content. Nathan Wei, MD is available for interview