



Fetal Tissue Research: What's at Stake

Taxpayer funding for fetal tissue research creates and sustains a market for the organs and tissues of unborn human beings. Whether an unborn child's liver is used to make a "humanized mouse" for drug testing, or a researcher orders a baby's brain to experiment on, the results are the same. Taxpayer dollars enable trafficking in baby body parts.

We can do better as Americans. We can offer hope and cures that are not dependent on the elective destruction of our baby brothers and sisters. We celebrate this move to redirect government subsidies to ethical alternatives and better science. Doing so puts an emphasis on a brighter, more hopeful future based on medicine that respects the rights of those who are born and unborn.

The Clinton-era promises of cures from fetal tissue have not born fruit. Today there are a host of alternative, effective approaches available, and the Trump administration is committed to funding them.

In June 2019, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced:

1. The fetal tissue supply contract with the University of California at San Francisco will not be renewed.
2. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will not conduct intramural research (research conducted at NIH facilities) requiring new acquisition of human fetal tissue from elective abortion.
3. Grant applications for new extramural research (research conducted outside of NIH facilities) involving human fetal tissue or competitive renewals for research involving human fetal tissue will be subject to a congressionally authorized review by an ethics advisory board.

Today, fetal tissue research remains legal and can be carried out with private dollars. This is a debate over what hardworking Americans fund, not about what researchers can do with their own funds or private donations.

"Fetal tissue" may sound like an abstract term, but there is nothing abstract about researchers ordering skulls, bones, hearts, eyes and livers from the bodies of infants who were too young and too vulnerable to speak for themselves.

The term “fetal tissue research” minimizes what is truly at stake. Consider a few specifics:

- A high-profile National Institutes of Health (NIH) [contract](#) with the University of California at San Francisco funded the creation of up to 90 humanized mice per month requiring use of fetal thymus and liver from babies between 17 and 24 weeks gestational age.
- Fetal tissue research all too frequently involves harvesting body parts from babies halfway through pregnancy. The need for healthy, fresh organs stops the abortionist from poisoning the baby with “digoxin” before removing him or her from their mother. This drastically increases the possibility that a baby could be born alive if delivered intact.
- The House Select Panel on Infant Lives [released a report](#) including a redacted email demonstrating the desire for whole baby body parts. The person collecting the “fetal tissue” tells a researcher they have procured limbs and calvarium [skull] from a 17.5 week baby. They say “the calvarium [skull] is somewhat crushed but looks to be all there.” They then ask if the researcher wants it, so they can contact their courier.

While some unborn children are targeted for abortion and sold for their body parts, others are treated with the same degree of care afforded other patients. These babies are disproving preconceived notions about viability and showing us their humanity as they undergo surgeries in the womb.

- Premature babies are surviving and receiving advanced care in NICUs around the world at earlier and earlier ages. A recent Canadian study surveying over 10,000 premature infants who received resuscitation at birth found a 64% survival rate for babies at 22 weeks old and 76% survival rate for babies born at 23 weeks old at the one-year mark.
- In December 2018, [Baby Saybie](#), was born at 23 weeks old. At just 8.8 ounces, she was about the size of a juice box, and the world’s smallest baby to survive. Due to life-sustaining care, she went home with her mom and dad last month. However, nine minutes away by car, at a Planned Parenthood center, a baby the same age, electively killed, can be [shipped out](#) whole or piece by piece, for use in experiments.
- Even abortionist, Owen Phillips testified before the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on the Constitution that [the fetus is a patient](#) although somehow she still does not consider him or her a person.
- Indeed, there is now [ample evidence](#) of babies in the womb undergoing lifesaving surgeries and treatments at the same ages at which other babies are being aborted and their brains, livers and other organs harvested for experiments.