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Relevant Local Fatwa on the Issues of Using Human Tissues in Articular Cartilage Tissue Engineering Experimentation

By: [Aa'zamuddin, ARM](#) (Aa'zamuddin, Muhammad A. R.)¹; [Syamimi, MAN](#) (Syamimi, Nur M. A.)¹; [Abdurezak, AH](#) (Abdurezak, A. H.)²; [Azhim, A](#) (Azhim, A.)¹; [Munirah, S](#) (Munirah, S.)³

IIUM MEDICAL JOURNAL MALAYSIA

Volume: 20 Issue: 1 Page: 127-135

Published: JAN 2021

Document Type: Review

Abstract

In articular cartilage tissue engineering (ACTE) experimentation, the researchers have utilised cells and tissues sampled from the human donor for research purposes. The cells and tissues may be harvested from the living donor's discarded tissues through a medical procedure, e.g. the total knee replacement surgery. The small pieces of a tissue sample taken from the human donor are essential to study the articular cartilage regeneration for treating joint disease, i.e. osteoarthritis. However, the procedure has raised some ethical and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) concerns. The study was done by utilising the secondary analysis of local Muslim jurists' opinions (fatwa) related to the sampling of human biological samples. This paper explores the scenarios of using cell sources taken from the living human donor through the existing fatwa of local Muslim jurists (fuqaha). The scenarios include: (1) taking samples from the living donor, and (2) discarding human tissue, as practised in ACTE experimentation. The current fatwa has shown that honouring every part of a human body is considered essential in Islam. ACTE researchers may utilise the biological samples from living donors as alternatives in studying articular cartilage regeneration. The donation of human biological samples for research purposes in ACTE experimentation, obtained from a medical procedure, may be permissible, should the stipulated terms and conditions were observed, and the procedure does not cause any additional harm to the donor.

Keywords

Author Keywords: [Articular cartilage](#); [tissue engineering](#); [experimentation](#); [cell sources](#); [Malaysian fatwa](#)

Keywords Plus: [STEM-CELLS](#); [SCAFFOLDS](#); [REPAIR](#)

Author Information

Corresponding Address: [Abdurezak, A. H.](#) (corresponding author)

▼ Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Biotechnol, Kulliyyah Sci, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, Kuantan, Pahang Darul Ma, Malaysia

Addresses:

▼ ¹ Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Biomed Sci, Kulliyyah Allied Hlth Sci, Kuantan, Pahang Darul Ma, Malaysia

▼ ² Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Biotechnol, Kulliyyah Sci, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, Kuantan, Pahang Darul Ma, Malaysia

▼ ³ Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Phys Rehabil Sci, Kulliyyah Allied Hlth Sci, Kuantan, Pahang Darul Ma, Malaysia

E-mail Addresses: hashi@iium.edu.my

Categories/Classification

Research Areas: [General & Internal Medicine](#)

Funding

Funding agency	Grant number	Hide All Details
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)		
Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF)	TRGS/1/2016/UIAM/02/8 -	
Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research (MHESR)	TRGS16-02-003-0003	Hide details

Appeared in source as: Ministry of Higher Education

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IIUM MEDICAL JOURNAL MALAYSIA

eISSN: 1823-4631

Current Publisher: INT ISLAMIC UNIV MALAYSIA, KULLIYAH MEDICINE, JALAN SULTAN AHMAD SHAH, KUANTAN PAHAN, 25200, MALAYSIA**Research Areas:** General & Internal Medicine**Web of Science Categories:** Medicine, General & Internal**40 Cited References**

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