

First Encounter Assignment

After you have read this box ...

Stem cells have the ability to become any type of cell. Because of this, scientists are exploring their potential to replace diseased tissues and organs in the body. Devastating diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes and cancer may one day be curable with stem cells. At present, it appears that blastocysts are the most promising source of stem cells. A blastocyst, or early embryo, is a hollow ball of about 100 cells that exists from about day five to day 10 of development. Harvesting the stem cells destroys the potential of the embryo to develop into an organism. Stem cells can also be found in adult tissue, but they are more difficult to isolate and may not have as extensive a potential as embryonic stem cells.

... answer the following question in a paragraph.

**Based on the information provided above, what is your opinion on the use embryonic stem cells to treat disease?
Explain your reasoning.**