

# Monkey cloning milestone hailed

By Roger Highfield, Science Editor

Last Updated: 12:01am GMT 15/11/2007

The [scientist who led the team responsible for cloning Dolly the sheep](#) yesterday hailed a breakthrough in monkey cloning which will spur the development of efficient ways to clone human embryos and grow stem cells for a vast range of medical treatments.

The advance, which will aid efforts to use a patient's own stem cells to treat Parkinson's, cystic fibrosis, motor neuron disease and many more ailments, is reported today in *Nature* by Shoukhrat Mitalipov and colleagues at Oregon Health & Science University, Beaverton.

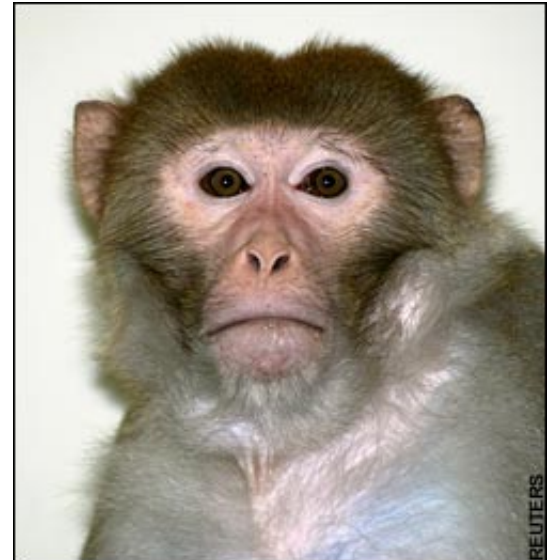
Although primates have been cloned before using old-fashioned "embryo splitting" methods, this is the first time it has been achieved with the more efficient Dolly cloning technique.

Prof Ian Wilmut, the director of the Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, who led the Dolly cloning effort, said: "The group in Oregon are to be congratulated."

However, Helen Wallace of Genewatch, which monitors biotechnology, said the breakthrough would cause "a real worry" in some quarters that it would tempt a renegade scientist to create a cloned baby.

"The clear risk of an experiment is of a deformed baby," she said. "In Britain, we don't think that the technology is going to go that far because there are laws, but in most countries there are no legal safeguards."

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The monkey was cloned through the same technique used to create Dolly the sheep