

# Skin Stem Cells

**Essay**

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Stem cells are known by their capacity of self-renewal and multilineage differentiation, which make them suitable in treating a broad spectrum of human diseases.

Stem cells have been categorized as (1) Embryonic stem cells (ESCs), (2) Adult stem cells (ASCs), (3) Fetal stem cells (fSCs), and (4) Cord blood stem cells (CB-SCs)

The inner cell mass is the source of embryonic stem (ES) cells. These cells have the ability of going through numerous cycles of cell division and maintain the undifferentiated state. ES cells are pluripotent, and are capable of differentiating into cells representing the three primary germ layers endoderm, ectoderm and mesoderm.

Adult stem cells are multipotent stem cells that possess the characteristic of plasticity and the ability to specialize and develop into other tissues of the body. Beginning in an unspecialized and undeveloped state, they can be differentiated to become heart tissue, neural matter, skin cells, and a host of other tissues.

Fetal stem cells (fSCs) are derived from the placenta, amniotic fluid or fetal tissues. FSCs are higher in number, expansion potential and differentiation abilities if compared with SCs from adult tissues.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>ASCs</b>	Adult stem cells
<b>B</b>	Bulge
<b>BL</b>	Basal layer
<b>BM</b>	Bone marrow
<b>BMZ</b>	Basement membrane zone
<b>BrdUrd</b>	Bromodeoxyuridine
<b>CB</b>	Cord blood
<b>CB-SCs</b>	Cord blood stem cells
<b>CFE</b>	Colony-forming efficiency
<b>CNS</b>	Central nervous system
<b>COL7A1</b>	Collagen, type VII, alpha 1
<b>COL17A1</b>	Collagen, type XVII, alpha 1
<b>CSCs</b>	Cardiac stem cells
<b>DEB</b>	Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosis
<b>DP</b>	Dermal papilla
<b>DPCs</b>	Dermal papillae cells
<b>DS</b>	Dermal sheath
<b>DSCs</b>	Dermal sheath cells
<b>E</b>	Epidermis
<b>EBs</b>	Embryoid bodies
<b>EBS</b>	Epidermolysis Bullosis simplex
<b>ECM</b>	Extracellular matrix
<b>EGFP</b>	Enhanced green fluorescent protein
<b>EMI</b>	Epidermal -Mesenchymal interaction
<b>EPU</b>	Epidermal proliferative unit
<b>ES</b>	Embryonic stem
<b>ESCs</b>	Embryonic stem cells
<b>FACS</b>	Fluorescence-activated cell sorting

### **List of Abbreviations (Cont.)**

<b>fSCs</b>	Fetal stem cells
<b>FSCs</b>	Follicle stem cells
<b>GE</b>	Germinative epithelial
<b>G protein</b>	Guanine nucleotide-binding protein
<b>GvHD</b>	Graft-versus-host disease
<b>H</b>	Hair
<b><sup>3</sup>H</b>	Tritiated thymidine
<b>HDMSCs</b>	Human dermis-derived MSCs
<b>HESCs</b>	Human embryonic stem cells
<b>HF</b>	Hair follicle
<b>HF-SMPCs</b>	Hair follicle-Smooth muscle progenitor cells
<b>HG</b>	Hair germ
<b>HSCs</b>	Hematopoietic stem cells
<b>HSDSCs</b>	Human skin-derived stem cells
<b>ICM</b>	Inner cell mass
<b>IFE</b>	The interfollicular epidermis
<b>Ifs</b>	Intermediate filaments
<b>IPS</b>	Induced pluripotent stem cells
<b>IRS</b>	Inner root sheath
<b>IVF</b>	<i>In vitro</i> Fertilization
<b>JEB</b>	Junctional Epidermolysis Bullosis
<b>K</b>	Keratins
<b>K5</b>	keratins 5
<b>K14</b>	keratins 14
<b>Klf4</b>	Kruppel-like factor 4
<b>KSCs</b>	Keratinocyte stem cells
<b>Lgr5</b>	Leucine-rich repeat-containing heterotrimeric guanine nucleotide-binding protein (G protein)- coupled receptor 5

## **List of Abbreviations (Cont.)**

<b>LRCs</b>	Label retaining cells
<b>MKTP</b>	Melanocyte keratinocytes transplantation
<b>MSCs</b>	Mesenchymal stem cells
<b>NC</b>	Neural crest
<b>NPCs</b>	Neural precursors
<b>NSCs</b>	Neural stem cells
<b>NT</b>	Nuclear Transfer
<b>Oct4</b>	Octamer 4
<b>OLCs</b>	Oocyte-like cells
<b>ORS</b>	Outer root sheath
<b>P 63</b>	Protein 63
<b>PGC</b>	Primordial germ cells-like cells
<b>PSC</b>	Pluripotent stem cells
<b>PUVA</b>	UVA + Psoralen
<b>S</b>	Sebaceous gland
<b>SCs</b>	Stem cells
<b>SCNT</b>	Somatic cell nuclear transfer
<b>Sec Germ</b>	Secondary Germ
<b>SKPs</b>	Skin-derived precursors
<b>SMCs</b>	Smooth muscle cells
<b>SMPCs</b>	Smooth muscle progenitor cells
<b>Sox2</b>	SRY box–containing protein 2
<b>SVZ</b>	Sub-ventricular zone
<b>TA cell</b>	Transit amplifying cell
<b>TES</b>	Tissue-engineered skin
<b>TSCI</b>	Traumatic spinal cord injury
<b>UCB</b>	Umbilical cord blood
<b>UVA</b>	Ultra violet A
<b>VSEL</b>	Very small embryonic-like
<b>V-SMCs</b>	Vascular smooth muscle cells

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## Introduction

Stem cells are known by their capacity of self-renewal and multilineage differentiation, which make them uniquely situated to treat a broad spectrum of human diseases (**Cui-ping and Xiao-ping, 2008**).

Mammalian stem cells are divided into two major categories: (1) Embryonic stem cells that may differentiate into all of the specialized tissues and (2) Adult stem cells that are present in tissues and are capable to regenerate and maintain the normal tissue turnover and repair by providing new specialized and differentiated cells (**Falabella, 2009**).

The inner cell mass is the source of embryonic stem (ES) cells, which have the ability of going through numerous cycles of cell division maintaining the undifferentiated state. ES cells are pluripotent, and are capable of differentiating into cells representing the three primary germ layers endoderm, ectoderm and mesoderm (**Zouboulis et al., 2008**).

Adult stem cells are the regenerative cells of the human body that possess the characteristic of plasticity and the ability to specialize and develop into other tissues of the body. Beginning in an unspecialized and undeveloped state, they can be differentiated to become heart tissue, neurones, skin cells, and other tissues (**Sharpless and Dephnhoh, 2007**).

Mammalian skin serves a number of vital physiological functions to maintain homeostasis. Skin provides a moisture barrier, regulates body temperature via hair follicles, sweat

glands, and dermal capillaries, and provides lubrication via sebaceous gland (**Cui-ping and Xiao-ping, 2008**).

Skin consists of two layers: the epidermis, a stratified squamous keratinized epithelium and an underlying thick layer of collagen-rich dermal connective tissues providing support and nourishment. Appendages, such as hair follicles and glands are derived from and linked to the epidermis but extend deep into the dermal layer (**Zheng et al., 2005**).

Significant advances have been made in identifying and locating the stem cells that inhabit the skin including epidermal stem cells, dermal stem cells and hair follicle stem cells (**Fernandes et al., 2004**).

The outermost, cornified layers of the epidermis are continually shed from the surface of the skin and are replenished through proliferation of cells in the basal layer (BL) that contained putative stem cells (SCs) in addition to the transiently amplifying (TA) cells, which give rise to terminally differentiating suprabasal layers (**Watt and Jensen, 2009**).

Epithelial stem cells are identified in the hair follicle bulge as quiescent "label retaining cells". Bulge cells possess stem cell characteristics, including multipotency and high proliferative potential. After wounding or transplantation; bulge cells give rise to epidermis, follicles, and sebaceous glands (**Tumbar et al., 2004**).

Hair follicle dermal stem cells reside in the dermal papillae (DP) at the base of the follicle and the dermal sheath

(DS) that surrounds the outside of the hair follicle. These cells exhibit some properties of stem cells, including regenerative potential, wound healing and ability to produce a functional dermis (**Cui-ping and Xiao-ping, 2008**).

Moreover, non-follicular mesodermal (mesenchymal) stem cells isolated from the dermis proved to be able to differentiate to endoderm and ectoderm due to their ability to synthesize nestin, fibronectin and vimentin as well as other marker proteins (**Zouboulis et al., 2008**).

ES cells can be derived by somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT). Somatic cells can be reprogrammed to an embryonic-like state by injection of the nucleus of a somatic cell into enucleated oocyte. Researchers report the use of nuclei from hair follicle stem cells and other skin keratinocytes as nuclear transfer (NT) donors to clone mice, revealing skin as a source of readily accessible stem cells (**Cui-ping and Xiao-ping, 2008**).

Expression of defined factors in human fibroblasts of the dermis of the skin generates induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS) morphologically and physiologically highly similar to human embryonic stem cells (HESCs) (**Lowry et al., 2008**).

The study of skin stem cells may lead to the treatment of skin loss, skin disease and hair loss (**Cui-ping and Xiao-ping, 2008**).

## Aim of the Work

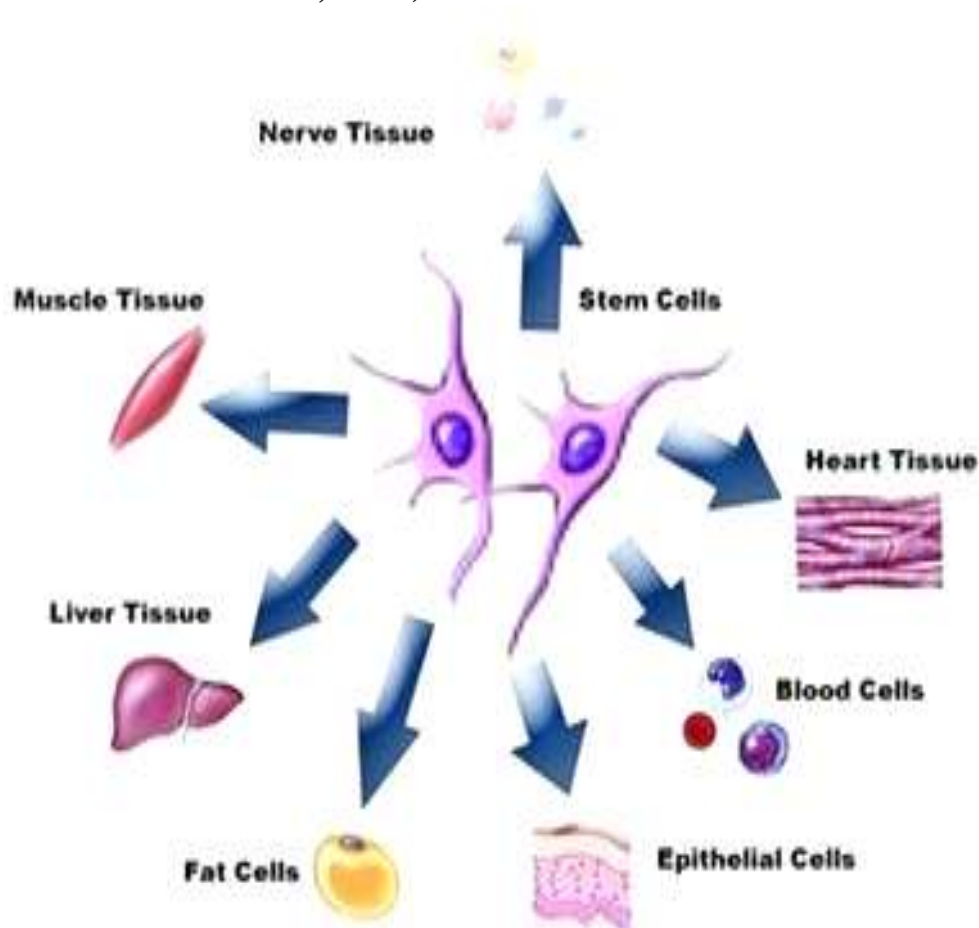
The aim of the present study is to make a review about the concept of stem cells, its exact site in skin (epidermal, dermal and follicular) and its clinical importance in different dermatological and non-dermatological disorders.

## Chapter (1):

### Stem Cell Basics

Stem cells (SCs) are undifferentiated cells that are defined by their ability to self renew and multilineage differentiation, (Fig.1) (Enver et al., 2009).

Stem cells divide much slower than the more differentiated cell type which is often interpreted as protecting against mutations and cytotoxic agents (Stiehl and Marciniak-Czochra, 2011).

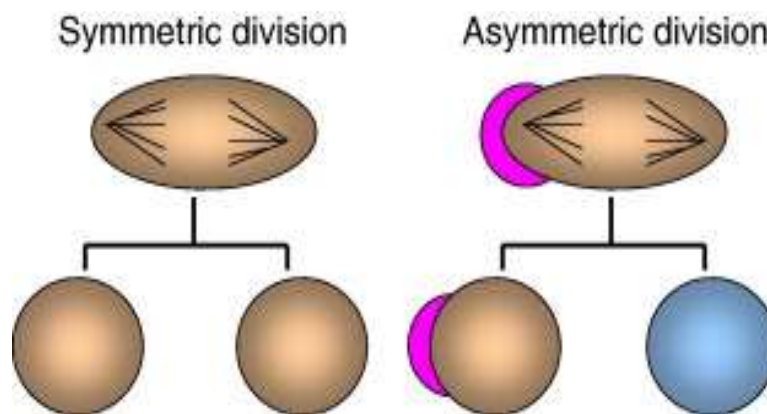


**Figure (1):** Stem cell multilineage differentiation (Enver et al., 2009).

## **I- Properties:**

Stem cells are characterized by the following properties: they are able to maintain the size of their population by producing offspring with stem cell properties (self renewal), able to give rise to cells with different biological properties (multipotency), are functionally non-specialized cells and their populations are morphologically and biochemically heterogeneous (**Dick, 2003**).

Replication of stem cells can occur either symmetrically or asymmetrically (Fig.2) (**Moore and Lemischka, 2006 & Zouboulis et al., 2008**).



**Figure (2):** Symmetric and asymmetric cell divisions  
(**Zouboulis et al., 2008**).

Symmetric division occurs when a stem cell divide to gives rise to two identical daughter cells. That allows the stem cell pool to be regulated by factors that control the probability of self-renewing versus differentiation. Stem cells typically cycle slowly, being in a mitotically quiescent form most of the time (**Yu and Silva, 2008**).