

Stem-Cell Support Holds at Six in 10

Intensified news coverage of the debate over embryonic stem-cell research hasn't had much impact on public opinion: About six in 10 people continue to support both the research and its federal funding, roughly the same as it was five weeks ago.

Sixty-three percent of Americans support such research in general, compared to 58 percent in late June. Support for federal funding has remained steady at 60 percent, while opposition gained five points to 36 percent.

		Stem-cell research			
		Personal view:		Government funding:	
		Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
July 30		63%	33	60	36
June 24		58	30	60	31

GROUPS - While the overall numbers are little changed, there have been some shifts among subgroups. Support for embryonic stem-cell research among white Catholics has gained 11 points to 65 percent, a fresh example of American Catholics' independence from church leaders. Last month Pope John Paul II urged George W. Bush to reject such research, and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has been a leading opponent.

Support for stem-cell research also has gained some ground, unexpectedly, in two other groups: Up by nine points among conservatives and by 11 points among Republicans. Indeed Republicans and Democrats alike are now in accord on the issue, with six in 10 supporting the research. Fifty-three percent of conservatives now support it as well.

Evangelical white Christians have moved slightly in the opposite direction, their opposition gaining seven points to create an even split, 47-47 percent. And opposition among liberals gained nine points, albeit to only 23 percent.

Bush is deliberating federal funding for stem-cell research, a contentious issue that pits the prospect of potential medical breakthroughs against religious and moral opposition to experimentation on human embryos. Bush opposed this research during the presidential campaign; however, it's supported in this poll by 57 percent of those who say they voted for him last November.

	Views on stem-cell research:			
	June 24		July 30	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Evangelical white Protestants	50%	40	47	47
White Catholics	54	35	65	33

Non-evangelical white Protestants	70	18	77	19
Conservatives	44	44	53	42
Moderates	63	26	64	32
Liberals	76	14	75	23
Republicans	49	37	60	36
Independents	62	26	67	29
Democrats	65	27	60	36
Whites	60	29	65	31
Blacks	48	44	50	47

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone July 26-30, 2001, among a random national sample of 1,352 adults. The results have a 2.5-point error margin. Fieldwork by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Jesse F. Derris.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results (*=less than 0.5 percent):

30. Sometimes fertility clinics produce extra fertilized eggs, also called embryos, that are not implanted in a woman's womb. These extra embryos either are discarded, or couples can donate them for use in medical research called stem-cell research. Some people (support stem-cell research, saying it's an important way to find treatments for many diseases). Other people (oppose stem-cell research, saying it's wrong to use any human embryos for research purposes). What about you - do you support or oppose stem-cell research?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
7/30/01	63	33	4
6/24/01	58	30	12

31. The federal government provides funding to support a variety of medical research. Do you think federal funding for medical research should or should not include funding for stem-cell research?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
7/30/01	60	36	3
6/24/01	60	31	9

END