

Stem cells are the starting point for every cell in every organ and tissue in our bodies. They have the unique ability to self-renew and to develop into any of the specialised types of cells.

There are two main categories of stem cells: embryonic and adult stem cells.

Embryonic stem cells are obtained from a very early stage in development. They are pluripotent as they can become any cell type in the body such as nerve cells, heart cells or liver cells.

Adult stem cells can be typically found in certain types of tissues that need to continuously replenish themselves such as blood or skin. Adult stem cells typically generate the cell types of the tissue or organ in which they reside and are called multipotent. For example, stem cells found within the brain can produce nerve cells but not liver cells.