

# Australian National Kennel Council Media Release

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## New Stem Cell Technology Combats Arthritis

A new type of stem cell technology is now being practised in Australia on dogs to relieve the pain associated with joint problems such as arthritis. This new technique is experiencing very high success rates. The procedure involves purification of the dog's own cells to relieve pain. The **Australian National Kennel Council** believes that this is a scientific breakthrough in veterinary practice, and that the procedure should be further explored for other uses in dogs.

**Regenerative Stem Cell Technology** (RSCT) involves the harvesting of small amounts fat cells from the dog itself. The cells are then processed and purified, and injected back into the affected joint.

The procedure is minimally invasive, using liposuction to harvest the fat. CT imaging guides the transplantation for accuracy and precision.

Success rates are high. Improvements in quality of life and range of movement of affected joints have been reported in 80 per cent of cases.

As the cells are harvested from the patient themselves, it comes as a welcome solution to the ethical dilemma surrounding the use of Embryonic Stem (ES) cells.

RSCT was developed in France and has been practised in Australia for less than 12 months. It is currently used to treat joint problems such as arthritis. However, veterinarian, and **Australian National Kennel Council** spokesman, **Dr Peter Higgins**, believes it has more potential than joint disease. "Current research is focussing on using the procedure to treat problems with the kidney, liver, and other diseases in dogs. It is very exciting where this research could take us.", exclaims **Dr Higgins**.

"This is a revolutionary type of treatment, and is definitely the way of the future. Costs are currently high, but as more people use the procedure and more vets are trained to carry it out, I can see it becoming the preferred way to treat joint problems in dogs.", believes **Dr Higgins**.

"While this type of treatment is still new, it has been in the research phase for decades. Now that it has become a viable option available to everyone, I can really see it taking off. This sort of stem cell treatment could revolutionise medicine as we currently know it.", explains **Dr Higgins**.

"Imagine the implications if this procedure was adapted for use in debilitating diseases as an alternative to conventional treatment. I would like to see the fuller potential of this procedure thoroughly researched and tested, especially since it avoids the ethical debate previously surrounding stem cell research. I believe that this sort of treatment should be researched further for use in other mammals, including humans.", said **Dr Higgins**.

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