

Abuse / Violence / Forced Abortion

Stem Cells, Abortion, Baby Parts, & the Ukraine

by APFLI | Jul 12, 2007 | [Abuse / Violence / Forced Abortion](#) | [0 comments](#)

June 2007 [http://www.hli.org/sr\\_june\\_07.pdf](http://www.hli.org/sr_june_07.pdf)

### **Ukrainian trafficking in baby parts—Reported by Brian Clowes, March 2007:**

The trafficking of baby parts in the Ukraine & the **Institute for Regenerative Medicine** in Barbados. This follow-up report exposes the horrific industry that connects these distant locales. The March 2006 HLI Special Report described how John Fusto and I visited Barbados in 2005 and exposed the Institute for Regenerative Medicine, or IRM.

The doctors at this facility claim on the IRM Website that they can completely cure or ameliorate every disease or injury known to man — including spinal cord trauma, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, diabetes, cancer, arthritis, and diseases of the liver, nervous system, blood, heart, and bowel.

The IRM has gone a long way towards fulfilling its promise to make Barbados the “Embryonic Stem Cell Capital of the World.” It imports aborted baby parts from Ukraine, liquefies them into a kind of “preborn pureé,” then injects them directly into the arms or body organs of customers. According to the IRM, these cells use a kind of “radar” to seek out diseased or damaged cells in the patient's body and repair them. The IRM claims an astonishing 96% improvement rate in curing virtually every disease ever recorded.

Rich English and American women find their way to this remote complex (at their own expense, of course), and are injected with fetal stem cells at \$25,000 per session. Barnett Suskind, CEO of the IRM, says that “It's the most natural form of healing there is. You think better, sleep better, look better. Your quality of life improves and your libido certainly improves.”

### **Only the Beginning**

When John and I were investigating the IRM in Barbados, we had no clue that we were taking the first steps towards uncovering an international conspiracy involving corruption at the highest levels of several governments, mad scientists by the score, a Nazi-style eugenics breeding program, mass murder, and Russian Mafia executions of witnesses.

When you've spent a few years in the pro-life movement, nothing tends to surprise you. But I have to tell you, this sure comes close. Upon arriving back at Human Life International, I was curious to see if the Institute for Regenerative Medicine was just a fluke — a unique facility unlike any other in the world. It turns out that the IRM is anything but unique. It is just a small part of a worldwide network of trafficking in human stem cells and organs — not only from embryos and fetuses, but from late-term aborted babies and even newborn babies.

In fact, I found websites and newspaper articles on more than 50 “clinics” that specialize in the alleged treatment of various diseases using fetal materials. All of these “clinics” possess features that should scare off the naive and desperate. Every single one of them is located in tourist destinations. Not one of them is regulated by any local or national government body. Not one of them has any form of medical supervision, except from those who are closely associated with the operations themselves. And all of them have refused to become members of the only recognized board regulating ethical stem cell research — **The International Stem Cell Forum**.

### **Oh, and one other thing — their “cures” don't work.**

At these “institutes” and “clinics,” unqualified doctors practice untested treatments under unregulated conditions on uninformed patients, a perfect atmosphere for ruthless exploitation. In fact, the only requirement that is strictly observed by these centers is the pre-operative palpitation of the prospective client's wallet. If it is thick enough, then they are qualified for treatment.

These clinics require only six things in order to set up shop and rake in millions of dollars: A little space, a poor government hungry for cash, someone with “M.D.” after their name, a website, a source of “fetal material,” and desperate patients.

Let's begin with Malibu psychiatrist William C. Rader's anti-aging **Medra** clinic in the Bahamas, which he co-founded with Yuliy Baltaytis, who now runs the Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

Rader's previous specialty was eating disorders, but he raked in more than \$30 million in just three years before being kicked off the island. Rader says that he has not published anything in the medical literature because it would leave him vulnerable to attacks from a “conspiracy of scientists, government authorities, and pro-lifers” — as convenient an excuse as any. Medra's website [www.medra.com] claims to cure every known disease, including physical brain damage.

**Biomark International** was founded in a condominium by a former model with no medical training whatsoever. She "treated" at least 220 patients at a cost of up to \$21,000 each by injecting them with fetal stem cells, regardless of the disease they were suffering. The co-founders of Biomark fled the USA after their operation was shut down by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and they promptly set up a Swiss bank account and began operations in London, contracting with Mexican doctors to do fetal stem-cell injections.

Kiev's **Embryonic Tissues Center (EmCell)** is operated by Alexander Smikodub and Alexey Karpenko, who have treated more than 2,000 patients at a total cost of more than \$30 million. Both have worked with William Rader in the past. EmCell's website [www.emcell.com] makes the usual bombastic claims about dramatic improvements in treating a stunning range of infirmities and diseases. When the ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) Therapy Development Foundation investigated EmCell, all of its employees refused to answer any of its questions on procurement, procedure, or follow-up. Doctors from the ALS Foundation found that EmCell personnel did not understand even the most basic principles of stem-cell physiology.

China's Hongyun Huang drills holes in the skulls of people with ALS and injects fetal stem cells directly into their brains. He presented his findings to a team of Harvard University doctors but admitted having no scientific data, and he essentially confessed to the assembly that he had absolutely no idea what he was doing. Clinical testing of such injections for Parkinson's disease ended in tragedy: More than half of the patients developed irreversible and uncontrollable movements of their limbs. Researchers reported that patients began to "c

hew constantly" and "writhe and twist, jerk their heads, and fling their arms about." One doctor said that the results are "absolutely devastating ... It was tragic, catastrophic. It's a real nightmare. And we can't selectively turn it off."

**There are dozens of other "institutes" offering miracle cures from the injection of fetal or embryonic stem cells and the transplantation of fetal tissue.** These include EmbryoTech [www.embryotech.com]; The Kharkov Clinic "Dr. Alex" [doctor-alex-ua/e/clinica.html]; Stem Cell Therapy International (SCTI) [www.scticorp.com]; StemCure, co-founded by disgraced cloner Panayiotis Zavos [www.stemcure.com]; and Donetsk's VitaCell [www.vitacell.com.ua].

### **Dr. Lazaryev Research Digs Up Horror**

The more I researched the international fetal stem cell industry, the deeper the rabbit hole turned out to be. The only problem was that this "rabbit hole" didn't lead to a Wonderland, but instead to a continent-wide chamber of biological horrors.

In late 2006, I heard about Vadym Lazaryev and Vladymyr Ischenko, two Ukrainian medical doctors who set up a small pro-life group that finally pierced the shroud of secrecy around the ghastly activities in Eastern Europe for the first time in the mid-1990s. After numerous death threats and then an actual attempt to murder them, the two doctors fled to Shannon, Ireland, and requested asylum.

Father Tom Euteneuer, President of Human Life International, sent me to Ireland to interview Drs. Lazaryev and Ischenko. Dr. Ischenko was reluctant to testify because he feared retaliation against his family in Ukraine...

While practicing medical oncology in Donetsk, Dr. Lazaryev began to wonder why doctors tell almost all pregnant women in Ukraine that there is a very high probability that their preborn children have serious birth defects. His own wife Elena was advised to have an abortion on the grounds that her preborn son would have severe birth defects — which, of course, he did not.

Dr. Lazaryev's own mother had thirteen pregnancies, eleven of which ended in abortion between his older brother and him.

He found that **all Ukrainian women are advised to abort because preborn children are excellent sources of organs and stem cells.**

Dr. Lazaryev found that the abortion rate in Ukraine is much, much higher than the official figures would suggest — in fact, about 1.2 million annually in a nation with a population of about 46 million, or more than six times higher than the abortion rate in the United States.

As Dr. Lazaryev says, "The only thing which protects unborn life in Ukraine is the courage of pregnant women."

Continuing his investigations, Dr. Lazaryev found that **women were paid \$200 to \$300 — three month's salary — to carry their pregnancies to a very late stage and to deliver the babies alive in a kind of forced premature birth.** This procedure allows the living baby's organs to be harvested while they are still as fresh as possible.

*Dr. Lazaryev also found that every region of Ukraine has twin institutions. One does the late-term 'artificial deliveries,' and the other dismembers the live-born baby and passes the parts on to other buyers, who screen the material and then sell it at a huge markup to the worldwide network of "clinics" like the Institute for Regenerative Medicine.*

Abortion clinics located in the poorest parts of Donetsk and Kharkov sell aborted babies to middlemen, who ship the sad little bodies to cities like Moscow, where there are more than **50 beauty parlors using fetal injections.**

One of these is the Cellulite Clinic, where rich Russian and Western women go to have fetal injections that supposedly eliminate cellulite from their buttocks, thighs, and arms. The costs of these treatments range up to \$20,000.

Dr. Lazaryev also found several Ukrainian websites that advertised prices for the parts of late-term preborn children. One of these is Cell Transplantation, which features practically every part of early- and late-term fetuses — liver, neuronal cells, thymus and thyroid, ovaries and testicles, eyes, and suspensions of liquefied fetal liver, brain, and spine.

### **The [Stem Cell] Empire Strikes Back**

One of the many contradictions of all of the anti-life movements is that they are all absolutely convinced that what they are doing is moral and acceptable — but they savagely attack those who make their activities public.

Dr. Lazaryev discovered this principle firsthand.

First, his supervisor called him a “traitor” and fired him. Then a government investigator became a constant and unwanted part of his life, visiting him at home on a weekly basis and grilling him on his activities.

Dr. Lazaryev refused to quit, so the stem-cell empire increased the pressure. He lost his medical benefits, which almost cost him his life when he became gravely ill in 2004. One doctor told him that “your politics are your death.” A government official called him and informed him that he was coming over with a gang of thugs to “break his head off.” Then the Tax Police suddenly began a long and exhaustive examination of his business, which shut it down. An SBU (Ukrainian Security Service) official visited him and told him that he had better get rid of all the evidence he had or his life would be in danger.

Finally, while Dr. Lazaryev was driving to a meeting in Slavyansk on a dark and deserted country road with his colleague Dr. Vladymyr Ischenko, a bus rammed their car at high speed and then drove off into the night. A police investigator said that the incident had been carried out by professionals, because the bus had aimed for the car’s fuel tank and had expertly run the car off the road.

In September 2004, Drs. Lazaryev and Ischenko finally concluded that their position was hopeless, and they fled the country of their birth, leaving their families behind. Dr. Lazaryev was finally reunited with his wife and children in 2006. Dr. Ischenko’s wife and twin infant sons are still in Ukraine [see [www.savethedoctors.org](http://www.savethedoctors.org)].

There is no doubt in Dr. Lazaryev’s mind that if he returns to Ukraine, “I will be killed because investors lost money. I will be killed as a

lesson for people who one day decide to raise their voice against this evil.”

Yet, after all of this, Drs. Ischenko and Lazaryev have still not been granted asylum in Ireland, despite the obvious threat to their lives. Speaking of their cases, Irish Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Kathy Sinnott said that “Their situation is very straightforward in terms of being genuine asylum seekers,” and went on to explain that they are being denied permanent asylum because Ireland wants to become a leader in the pharmaceutical field. Ireland would place no limitations on the activities of drug firms and would like the Irish people to “get over our ethical problems and get on with the real business of making money and attracting pharmaceutical companies and frontline research.”

In other words, the case of the Ukrainian doctors is embarrassing to Ireland. If the nation grants them asylum, it will implicitly be condemning the very activities it would like to attract to the shores of the Emerald Isle.

### **Even Worse Atrocities**

In an environment of total corruption, the organ harvesters have no reason to stop carving up late-term babies delivered alive.

*In 2005, Council of Europe investigators found that hundreds of newborn babies had been stolen from their mothers in the Ukrainian cities of Kiev and Kharkov. In each case, the mothers were poor and powerless and were told that their babies had simply died or were “gone.”*

*The investigators exhumed many of the missing babies. Their arms and legs had been severed, their chest cavities were empty, and their brains were missing. As investigator Tatyana Zakharova said, “They were like gutted rabbits.”*

These newborn babies are dismembered without the benefit of expensive anesthesia. As Zakharova testified upon seeing one of the baby’s bodies, “Look, here is the grimace of a human crying, it is hurt ... It has the grimace of a shouting person. So this is the proof. I’m saying that he was alive when he was being cut.”

The poor Ukrainians are jaded to tales of biological horrors, corruption, genocide, and lawbreaking on a massive scale. But, as one reporter poignantly lamented, “They used to say we were selling Ukraine. Now we are selling Ukrainians; moreover, in parts.”

Perhaps it is not at all surprising that the atrocities that have happened in Ukraine are now being committed in Barbados, home of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine. After all, why bother to import babies from 5,000 miles away when you can get them locally?

Barbados news sources are now reporting that women are having their newborn babies stolen at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They are told their babies are “gone” or have died, and they never see them again. Perhaps not coincidentally, one of the members of the Board of Directors of Queen Elizabeth Hospital is George Griffith, who is director of the Barbados Family Planning Association, the island’s largest abortion provider and an affiliate of the International Planned Parenthood Federation [www.bfpa.net].

### **Fetal Attraction**

**What drives the fetal and newborn tissue machinery is a huge and increasing demand for stem cells and organs.**

*Dr. Bernard Nathanson has estimated that tons of fetal organs and stem cells will be required annually as the basic material that fuels this gigantic conspiracy against life.*

*The vast amount of money involved in such transactions is staggering. The international pharmaceutical corporations, laboratories, and all of the fake “rejuvenation” clinics demand a reliable and constant supply of human embryonic and fetal tissue. This fact alone ensures that unethical and inhumane practices will continue, regardless of what legal restrictions are put in place.*

**The organs from a single disease-free late-term aborted baby in Ukraine can fetch about \$17,000. The body of a newborn baby is worth even more.**

*Given the 1.2 million annual abortions in Ukraine, we find that the fetal and embryonic stem cell and organ trade in this one country is worth multiple hundreds of millions — perhaps even billions — of dollars annually, even if only a small percentage of the aborted babies are used for research and harvesting. This money goes a long, long way in a nation where the average yearly salary of a highly-trained doctor is only about \$2,500.*

### **No End to the Atrocities**

Evil is virtually impossible to contain once it is released. For some people, there is only one rule: Do it if it is profitable, if you can find enough helpless victims, and if you can get away with it. Once all limitations and ethics have been cast aside, literally anything goes — and has, indeed, already gone ...

**Brothel owners bid openly outside the Gatwick Airport Starbucks for enslaved Slavic and Asian women**, who are lured to England with promises of legitimate jobs. Right after they clear immigration, they are seized and sold.

**The Albanian and Russian Mafias run “baby factories” in Athens and other cities, where young Bulgarian and Romanian Gypsy women are selected for health and appearance and impregnated by male Mafia members. The women give birth in a secret location, and the Mafia then sells their babies to rich Westerners under the guise of a legitimate adoption service.**

*Once they have borne their babies, the women are either forced into prostitution or simply murdered.*

This systematic rebirth of the German Nazi Lebensborn program is not confined to Eastern Europe.

The San Antonio, Texas-based Abraham Center of Life is now advertising **custommade embryos** to order. For a fee of \$10,000, prospective parents can buy an embryo that has the preferred hair and eye color, skin color, hair color, intelligence, and other many other characteristics [www.theabrahamcenteroflife.com].

**Romania's flourishing human egg trade ruthlessly exploits poor female factory workers.**

They are paid more than a month's salary to submit to an allegedly “safe, easy, and painless” medical procedure. Their ovaries are hyperstimulated to produce dozens of eggs at a time, which are then harvested. This proced

ure is forced on the women repeatedly, and they are never told that they can opt out. They are prohibited from seeking independent medical or legal advice. Hearings found that some of these women were so ruthlessly harvested that their personalities were destroyed and they became physically paralyzed.

### **Conclusion**

We in the United States can learn a stern lesson from Eastern Europe. We are heading in the same direction as the Ukrainians and the Romanians — we are just getting there at a more leisurely pace. We already have clinics offering babies to order through preimplantation genetic diagnosis. We have late-term abortions for “mild depression.” We allow handicapped newborn babies to die of starvation and thirst. And we also starve to death those adults who have become inconvenient (remember Terri Schaivo?).

[June 2007, Special Report, HLI, hli.org, [http://www.hli.org/sr\\_june\\_07.pdf](http://www.hli.org/sr_june_07.pdf)]

December 2006

#### **REPORTER FURTHER EXPOSES ABORTION-STEM CELL-BEAUTY TREATMENT SCANDAL**

British reporter Matthew Hill has uncovered a grisly practice where babies from Ukraine are killed via infanticide or become victims of abortions for their stem cells for dubious beauty treatments. The practice involves ravaging the babies' bodies for organs and stem cells.

As LifeNews.com previously reported, Hill produced a documentary for the BBC showing how a hospital is snatching newborns and aborted babies and giving their parts and cells to stem cell firms around the world for controversial beauty injections.

Hill writes in a Monday article in the London Daily Mail newspaper about how he uncovered the scandal, including a videotape of post-mortem examinations.

He says a charity worker at a hospital in the eastern Ukrainian city Kharkiv showed him the videotape.

"Officially, the cells are taken from aborted fetuses with the mothers' consent," Hill writes, but "there could also be hundreds of babies stolen to order, to feed demand for stem cells from around the world."

Hill says the first hint he found of the bizarre trade came from stem cell researcher Stephen Minger, from Kings College.

Minger told Hill that a Barbados clinic called the Institute For Regenerative Medicine, had contacted him to get his endorsement of the IRM beauty treatments involving the injection of stem cells from the dead babies.

Minger said he refused, saying there were no studies backing up IRM's claims the injections would have the desired effect. He also was upset at how the babies were harvested for their stem cells, saying some of the babies could have been "liquidized" to obtain the cells.

"I find it very distasteful that they are used for beauty treatments," Minger told Hill. "As far as I can tell from what's been published, a lot of people go to this clinic in Barbados feeling a bit run down, or that their skin has just lost some elasticity, and they are getting 'smoothies' or perk-me-ups."

The Daily Mail report says IRM buys the stem cells from the Ukraine hospital.

Hill went to Barbados to get more information and he eventually met with one of IRM's senior doctors, Shami Ramesh.

Ramesh said he would show Hill proof of how the beauty injections work or how they help patients with various diseases.

"This 'proof' turned out to be one study of a single patient with motor neurone disease and another of eight cardiac patients. The numbers were too small for proper analysis and the data had not been published in any reputable peer-reviewed journal," Hill wrote.

Ramesh said the best proof was in how many patients kept coming back for more injections.

Hill said Ramesh denied allegations that the stem cells his firm uses come from newborn babies snatched from their mothers and killed for their cells and body parts.

"He said he had faith in the Institute of Cryobiology in Kharkiv, the source of the stem cells used by the Barbados clinic, but added that 'maybe in the future we will go and check it out,'" Hill wrote in the newspaper report.

Hill then traveled to Ukraine and said Dr. Valentin Greshenko, head of the Institute of Cryobiology refused to be interviewed.

Searching for details, he went to the Maternity Hospital Number Six, located in a high-crime section of Kharkiv.

There, he interviewed a 26 year-old woman, Svetlana Plusikova, who had a normal pregnancy but was told after birth that her baby was stillborn. Doctors refused to let her see the baby.

"I think she was stolen. If she was dead I should have been allowed to see her. I think a lot of young mothers like me lost their children, but right now nobody turns to the police," she told Hill.

Dimitry and Olena Stulnev shared with Hill their own story of how their baby was shown to them and then doctors claimed the baby died the next day. Hospital officials refused to provide them more information or allow them to see their baby.

Hill said he eventually obtained videotaped evidence of the infanticides and abortions from Tatyana Zhakarova, from the Federation Of Families With Many Children.

"Tatyana discovered many more infants had died at the hospital in similarly odd circumstances. And after intensive lobbying, the authorities eventually agreed to have the tiny bodies of around 30 babies exhumed and examined," Hill wrote in the Daily Mail.

"Tatyana showed me the video she had been allowed to record of the post-mortem examinations that followed. The gruesome film shows the carcasses of babies, some of whom were full-term, with their organs and brains missing," Hill added.

In an attempt to prevent exposing the truth, officials have apparently apprehended Tatyana's 20 year-old son. He has been missing since October and she fears he's been killed.

Ultimately, Hill was granted five minutes to talk with Maternity Hospital Number Six's chief doctor Larysa Nazarenko.

"The children are not lost," she told Hill. "They are not stolen — that's just somebody else's illusion."

"There is no such therapy," she said, according to the London newspaper. "No work in this hospital is connected with the use of cells. This is the wrong address. I deny everything."

Hill reports that the Council Of Europe has started its own investigation of the barbaric stem cell trade and it's first report talks of a "culture of trafficking of children snatched at birth and a wall of silence from hospital staff upwards over their fate."

Related news stories:

Clinics Use Tissue From Babies Killed in Abortions for Cosmetic Injections

<http://www.lifenews.com/nat2486.html>

Abortion, Infanticide of Ukraine Babies Fuels Stem Cell Research Industry

<http://www.lifenews.com/bio1910.html>

[18Dec06, Ertelt, LifeNews.com London, England]

2006

**UKRAINE ABORTIONS.** You may have seen the BBC story in December on Ukraine maternity hospital suspected of killing babies for stem cells – <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6171083.stm>.

There was an additional story in the UK

Telegraph: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/12/17/wbaby17.xml>

March 2006

**DOCTORS SEEK ASYLUM AFTER EXPOSING UKRAINE ABORTION FOR COSMETICS SCANDAL.** Two Ukrainian doctors, Vadym Lazaryev and Vladymyr Ishchenko, have been seeking asylum in Ireland since 2004, after they were forced to flee their country for exposing appalling human rights abuses of women and unborn children in the Ukraine.

The doctors were part of a group working to uncover a system of medical trafficking in the bodies of unborn babies, European Life Network reported today. Doctors were deceiving women into aborting their babies for false "medical" reasons, and then selling the bodies of the children.

The children would be aborted live, and their bodies cut into separate organs. In some cases live dissection took place. Most of the body parts were apparently sold to the burgeoning cosmetic industry of "foetal tissue" youth-enhancing treatments, as well as quack "medical therapies."

In many cases, women were paid to get pregnant and to deliver the baby at a given gestation. They were paid a higher price for carrying the child closer to term, since abortion is illegal in the Ukraine after 12 weeks gestation.

In September 2005 the rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, issued a report on the disappearance of newborn babies in the Ukraine. Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold called for an immediate re-opening of judicial investigations into

allegations of trafficking of babies for adoption and of aborted or premature babies for "scientific" purposes, after visiting the Ukraine August 29-Sept. 1, 2005.

She obtained detailed information on four cases during her visit, reported the Council of Europe Press. In one instance, the family of the missing child had been told by doctors that their baby had died but had not been given permission to see or bury the baby.

Doctors Vadym L. and Vladymyr I. had full police participation in their investigation, but when the investigation revealed government sanction of the trafficking and the involvement of prominent doctors, they were advised to stop. The police told them they could not guarantee their safety. After an attempt was made on their lives, they fled the country to Ireland, leaving behind their families. A documentary on the expose was screened in the Ukraine after they had left.

They are now seeking permanent asylum in Ireland for themselves and their families. Both have children-Dr. Vladymyr Ischenko has not seen his first children, twins who were born six months after he fled the Ukraine.

After four intensive interviews over fifteen months, they were denied refuge in 1/06. Their appeal will be heard in Dublin March 30. It could take up to a year for the outcome to be known. (Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach) Ahern will officially open Homosexual Activist Office) Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Bertie Ahern [taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie](mailto:taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie); Minister for Justice: Michael McDowell [info@michaelmcdowell.ie](mailto:info@michaelmcdowell.ie); <http://www.savethedoctors.org>; <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1461654,00.html>

Abortion Encouraged in Ukraine as Unborn Babies Used for Russian Beauty Treatments  
<http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2005/may/05052411.html> [By Gudrun Schultz, Ireland, 29March06 LifeSiteNews.com]

2005

### **BEAUTY SALONS FUEL TRADE IN ABORTED BABIES: Racketeers pay Ukraine women to sell fetuses to quack clinics for £10,000 courses of 'anti-ageing'&#3**

#### **9; shots**

Aborted fetuses from girls and young women are being exported from Ukraine for use in illegal beauty treatments costing thousands of pounds. The fetuses are cryogenically frozen and sold to clinics offering 'youth injections', claiming to rejuvenate skin and cure a raft of diseases.

It is thought that women in the former Soviet republic are being paid £100 a time to persuade them to have abortions and allow their fetuses to be used in treatments.

Most of the fetuses are sold in Russia for up to £5,000 each. Some are paid extra to have abortions late in their pregnancy.

Border guards stopped a train entering Russia from Ukraine last week and arrested a 'mule' carrying 25 frozen fetuses hidden in two vacuum flasks. The man said he had bought them from a medical research center. Ukrainian law allows an aborted human fetus to be passed to research institutes if the woman involved consents and her anonymity is protected. But police say staff at state health institutions are selling them to private clinics offering illegal therapy.

'It is extremely difficult to detect this because there are corrupt agreements between respected doctors and academics,' said one senior officer.

Beauty salons in Moscow that buy the aborted material to provide 'fetal therapy' are flourishing, despite a Russian ban on all commercial treatments using human cells other than bone marrow. The salons offer injections of stem cells, the undivided cells present in embryos that can adapt into any kind of tissue, although they are still at the trial stage worldwide.

Sergei Shorobogatko, a former Kiev policeman who is investigating the trade, said abortion clinics in the poor eastern regions of Donetsk and Kharkiv are selling fetuses – often untested for viruses such as AIDS – without permission.

Abortions performed more than 12 weeks into a pregnancy are restricted in Ukraine. Older fetuses fetch extra because their curative powers are thought to be greater.

'When a doctor wants a fetus [to sell], he tells a girl there is a medical reason for an abortion later than 12 weeks,' said Shorobogatko. 'A special procedure extracts it with the placenta.'

The woman would be paid to wait until a late stage of her pregnancy, or might never even know she was duped, he said. Her aborted fetus would be passed to a middle-man or institution, which would cut it into separate organs before placing these in storage. The material was then sold and taken abroad.

Beauty courses of injections using blends of fetal cells are banned in Ukraine and Russia, but they are widely available in salons that charge up to £10,000. Wealthy clients are told the treatment can stop the ageing process, or eliminate such debilitating conditions as Parkinson's disease or Alzheimer's.

One fashionable Moscow clinic approached by The Observer promised to 'take 10 years off your face'.

'We are talking about a huge, corrupt and dangerous trade in quack therapies,' said Professor Vladimir Smirnov, director of the city's Institute of Experimental Cardiology. Outside state institutes, Russian law allows only extraction and storage of human cells, but enforcement is lax.

Earlier this month the Ministry of Health announced that 37 out of 41 clinics offering stem-cell treatments in Moscow were acting illegally. Yet most continue to operate.

'What is unclear is what people are injected with,' said Dr Stephen Minger, of King's College, London. 'Are they really stem cells or a mixture of tissues?' Ukrainians, accustomed to tales of illegal privatizations and government corruption, are not surprised.

'They used to say we were selling Ukraine,' said one reporter. 'Now we are selling Ukrainians; moreover, in parts.' [Tom Parfitt in Kiev, 17April05, The Observer; 25May05. Pro-Life E-News; <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,6903,1461654,00.html>; [ple-news@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ple-news@yahoogroups.com), no. 626, 26May05]

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