

Review: Potential of Stem Cells as Regenerative Medicines

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Abstract

Regenerative medicines are used to restore the normal function of the damaged organs and tissues to repair them or replace them with functional ones by using a complex surgical process. Limited number of the organ donors as well as the complex surgical procedure turned this field to use an alternative way. The best alternative way is to use the stem cells. Stem cells are the cells that have self renewal capacity as well as have capability to differentiate into specialized and specific cell lineages to repair or replace the damaged tissue or organ. So, the problems that are faced during transplantation are overcome by using stem cells. There are a number of sources of stem cells and their differentiation abilities are vary according to their sources such as some cells give rise to all cell types while some are not. Sources of stem cells are embryo, adipose tissues, amniotic fluid, bone marrow etc. and cell type specific stem cells such as dental pulp stem cells etc. Stem cells have proved their importance and potential as regenerative medicines form fatal diseases such as damaging of heart, kidney, lung and liver to less fatal diseases such as osteoporosis and damaging of teeth. Stem cells also used in the enhancement of aesthetic value of a person by plastic or reconstructive surgery. Paracrine factors and the surrounding environment also have impact on the working of stem cells.

Keywords: Regenerative medicines, stem cells, differentiation

1. Introduction

Stem cells are defined as the cells that have the greater ability of self renewal which means that they have tendency to undergo a number of cycles of cell divisions to produce daughter cells and they also have capability to differentiate into specialized cell types [1, 2]. These stem cells are divided and differentiated into different cells that are appropriate for the tissues in which they are found. Stem cells are described as: **(1) Totipotent:** these stem cells are differentiated into all the cell types of an organism including extraembryonic tissues of embryo. **(2) Pluripotent:** these stem cells are differentiated into all cells types except extraembryonic tissues. **(3) Multipotent:** these stem cells are differentiated into all the cells types of a specific tissue. **(4) Unipotent:** these stem cells are differentiated into only one specific lineage of cells of a specific tissue [3].

The types and sources of stem cells are: **(1) Embryo:** embryonic stem cells of human are pluripotent and source is blastocysts [4, 5]. **(2) Adult stem cells:** adult stem cells are multipotent and differentiate into cells that are specific to the organs where they are found [6, 7] and are derived from Bone Marrow, Dental pulp, Adipose Tissues, Amniotic fluid, skin, skeletal muscle and Cord Blood [6, 8, 9]. **(3) Induced pluripotent stem cells:** these cells are produced by reprogramming of adult somatic cells or from the cells of patient that have a specific disease [10-16].

Regenerative medicine is a multi-disciplinary field that holds the promise of repairing and replacement of the damaged organs or tissues as well as the restoration of the normal function of a damaged organ or tissue. It is done by the consistent and effectual therapies that are composed by living cells [17]. Regenerative medicines based on transplantation of the organs and cell therapies by hematopoietic cell transplantation has been practiced from many years for example transplantation of bone marrow [18]. Regenerative medicines hold the huge opportunity as there is increasing ageing population with illness. So for gene therapy, cultured and stem cells can be used and these cells can also be used to study the process of a specific disease or for drug development, in laboratory experiments [19].

The basic aim of the regenerative medicines is to restore the normal function of the organ that have damaged due to chemical, physical defect or genetic or infectious disease [20]. The patient with damaged organs or tissues have need to replace their organs with functional one by organ transplantation. Very low number of the organ donors for the organ transplantation has been triggered the regenerative medicine to research on stem cells as an alternative and potential source for the organ or tissue development and replacement. The discovery of the methods for the generation and isolation of stem cells from different sources holds the promise as an alternative for the cell based therapy. [21].

Stem cells play a significant role in the regeneration of the defective tissues. Among clinical therapies immense hope was showed by intraoperative cell based therapy [22]. For regenerative therapies stem cells have enormous applications because they are the fundamental units and they show potential for that purpose but they are not solo actors because stem cells respond to the extrinsic or molecular signals that subsequently direct their behavior [23]. By the expression of some combined transcription factors the adult somatic cells are converted into

stem cells called induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) that are used for the treatment of numerous disorders and diseases of the organs/tissues [24]. Besides these, the embryonic, amniotic, dental pulp, cord blood and adipose derived stem cells are used as a regenerative medicines to treat different diseases or failure of organs.

2. Stem cells as regenerative medicines in dentistry

In dentistry, the regenerative therapy was used to replace or restore the function of defective teeth by using explants from autologous cells. It has been examined by using the biology of stem cell. Stem cells from the dental tissues that can only differentiate into in the lineages of the dental cells were identified and these cells have been used for the regeneration of the dental tissues. For the replacement of the whole tooth, production of bioengineered teeth was done by cell clamp and scaffold methods. *In vivo* development of tooth in the oral environment of adult was also reported [25].

It was identified that the pulps of the impacted, deciduous and human permanent teeth have stem cells that have the ability to differentiate into odontoblast [26-28]. Cells of the dental pulp of the human teeth and stem cells of the periodontal tissues that were isolated from the erupted human teeth, involved in the regeneration of the periodontal tissues by cellular transplantation into the teeth of adult [29, 30]. Multipotent stem cells of impacted teeth of human were identified to differentiate into the cells lineages of neurons and hepatocytes [31]. For the generation of the whole tooth, the stem cells of the somatic dental tissue were identified as valuable candidates and adult bone marrow was also identified as a source of beneficial cells [32]. It was examined that mesenchymal stem cells have ability to rapidly increase their number and thus have given an assurance that stem cells have positive influence in dentistry. Stem cells derived from adipose tissues have some prime factors such as strong capability of the secretion of growth factor as well as the high rate of the differentiation of cell. Adipose tissues have abundant number of stem cells and these cells were isolated easily from adipose tissues. Stem cell based regenerative medicines have some prime factors such as low number of unhealthy effects, have high duplication rate and a greater level of safety regarding both; the collection and the grafting of cells [33].

Dental pulp was identified as a source of mesenchymal stem cells. Dental pulp stem cells were shown multipotency as they have the ability to differentiate into different cell lineages such as adipocytes, osteoblast, chondrocytes, neural lineages and odontoblast. They possessed high duplication rate and accessed easily and have a role in teeth tissue regeneration [34]. Dental stem cells were played role in the development of whole human tooth and defected teeth were replaced with bioengineered human teeth in regenerative dentistry [35].

3. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for lung

The potential of the stem cells that were present inside the lung was investigated to study their potential to repair the injured or defective lung. Stem cells that were not taken from lung were also studied to analyze their efficiency potential in the repair mechanism of lung [36]. It was determined that the progenitor and the stem cells taken from the lung, played a role in epithelial conservation and in the restoration of the function of injured lung [37].

Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) were identified as promising candidates to repair the defects of lung based on immune system and inflammation response. Almost 50 studies were published to treat these disorders in animal models [38]. MSCs were also played role to reduce the inflammation of lung as well as deposition of collagen. It was thought that MSCs were produced an antagonist receptor of interleukin-1 α of anti-inflammatory nature to repair the defects due to inflammation [39].

Adipose derived stem cells were proved helpful in the protection against sepsis and for the reduction of inflammation of lung. Mesenchymal stem cells were subjected and their role were determined for appropriate functioning of lung that was damaged by sepsis [40, 41].

4. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for Kidney

Kidney is one of the most complicated organs of the body. Kidney transplantation was performed to replace the damaged kidney but limited number of donor were posed a problem. Regenerative medicines based on stem cells was a new hope to overcome this problem [42].

With the help of different factors, embryonic stem cells were speciated into renal cells and thus played a role to form embryonic tubule epithelia when cultured with the addition of bone morphogenetic protein 4 [43].

Mesenchymal stem cells were differentiated into many types of renal cells such as into peritubular capillary of renal [44], into epithelium of renal [45], into stem cells of renal to cure the acute kidney disease in mouse model [46], into podocytes of glomerular as well as tubular cells [47] and into the mesangial cells of glomerular [48].

Stem cells derived from amniotic fluid were used to regenerate the kidney because they were divided at organogenesis stage of kidney [49]. Induced pluripotent stem cells were taken as the future of stem cells based regenerative medicines for kidney [50].

5. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for Heart

Mammals have no ability to regenerate the damaged tissues instead they were formed a scar tissue to heal and protect the further damaging of the tissue but function of organ was deteriorated. It was determined that stem cells combining with immune response were played a role for regeneration [51].

It was reported that resident stem cells of cardiac are able to replace the injured myocardium [52]. Embryonic stem cells were differentiated into cardiac muscle cells. Laboratory experiments were showed that these cardiomyocytes were contracted involuntary and have capacity to generate many cardiac phenotypes including organization of myofibrillar and cardiac protein. These cells were used to replace the damaged cardiomyocytes [53].

In vivo derived cardiac muscle cells from embryonic stem cells were used as pacemakers in those models of heart that were blocked atrioventricularly [54]. Laboratory experiments were showed that mesenchymal stem cells differentiated into sarcomeres and into cardiac muscle cells with involuntary action when treated with 5-Azacytidine [55]. By three dimensional compositions, human mesenchymal stem cells were produced cardiac protein in laboratory experiments [56].

The early experiments were done for the regeneration of the myocardial by directly injecting the undifferentiated embryonic stem cells into damaged heart. Reprogramming of somatic cells to produce induced pluripotent stem cells has been used to eliminate the need of embryonic stem cells [57, 58]. Improvements into myocardial function were showed by this but there are some associated risks such as these undifferentiated cells were formed teratomas in the heart's wall [59, 60]. One solution to overcome this problem is the differentiation of these cells into more ratios committed cells before transplantation [61].

It was demonstrated that mouse induced pluripotent stem cells were differentiated into all of the three cell types of cardiovascular by sharing pathway with embryonic stem cells for development [62, 63]. Human induced pluripotent stem cells were also showed the same ability [64]. In laboratory, beating activity was recorded by cardiac muscle cells that were derived from induced pluripotent stem cells without the use of Myc reprogramming factor [65].

It was examined in animal models that transplantation of cardiomyocytes, derived from induced pluripotent stem cells, boosted up the function of left ventricular. The subsequent treatment were examined to bring back the contractile performance, electric stability and thickness of the ventricular wall by on site differentiation of heart muscle, endothelial tissues and smooth muscle [66].

Coronary artery disease (CAD) was wide spread disease and stem cells especially mesenchymal stem cells were showed high potential as a regenerative medicine to cure CAD because of their high regenerative and plasticity capability. Stem cells that were present in adventitia of large vessels have activity of blood vessels formation with no safety risks and played a healing role in CAD [67]. Stroma of heart has niches of stem cells and these cardiac cells were phenotypically distinguished as Sca-1+, + MDR-1+, c-kit+ etc [68]. In mouse models, these cardiac stem cells were regenerated and differentiated into vessels but these cardiac cells were bounded by some limitations [68-70].

Mostly heart failure and the mortality of cardiovascular was done by the myocardial infarction [71] and early clinical studies were showed that stem cell therapy enhanced the function of heart [72, 73]. Repair mechanism by stem cell therapy was done by the release of paracrine factors from stem cells in the damaged myocardial tissues that lead to the formation of functional microvascular networks with red blood cell perfusion, cardiac remodeling and myocardial protection [74].

6. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for Liver

Exocrine as well as endocrine functions are carried by a gland called Liver [75]. Liver is responsible to carry out many essential functions that are involved in the homeostasis of human body. Damaged liver was unable to perform these functions and only potential cure for this was the liver transplantation that have limitation of donor. To overcome this limitation, bioartificial liver devices were developed by using human embryonic stem cells (hESCs) with tissue engineering technique. hESCs derived hepatic endoderm was used in regenerative medicine for liver [76]. Hepatic endoderm was developed from hESCs by using different signaling physiology [77-90].

Different therapies were developed to cure liver diseases. Therapies with hepatocytes required 100 to 150 million hepatic cells and immunosuppression and provide relief for several years. Mesenchymal stem cells were produced hepatic parenchymal cells by immune-modulation and paracrine signaling and provide relief from months to years [91].

For end stage liver disease, transplantation of hepatocytes was used as an effective treatment besides liver transplantation but problem was the shortage of the suitable cell source for that purpose. Different methods were developed to differentiate the adult and embryonic stem cells into hepatocytes and application of these hepatocytes in regenerative medicine [92].

It was reported that the pluripotent stem cells extracted from bone marrow were successfully transplanted into mouse model to regenerate the liver [93]. Experimental verification of a report was received when Y

chromosome positive hepatocytes were detected into the livers of the recipients of female mouse models that were subject to bone marrow transplantation from male donors [94-97].

A number of studies were also confirmed the differentiation of embryonic stem cells of human into hepatocytes [82, 88, 98, 99]. It was also reported that when embryoid body was formed then embryonic stem cells of human automatically developed into hepatocytes [82, 88, 89] or developed by following the steps of a sequential process. It was identified that hepatocytes like cells, derived from embryonic stem cells, could be induced to sodium butyrate medium directly [86, 87, 99] then the rearrangement of chromatin with the enhancement of liver function occurred and hepatocytes became immortalized [100, 101].

It was examined that pluripotent stem cells produced from fibroblast of human could be used to produced induced pluripotent stem cells. If enough quantity of induced pluripotent stem cells that have enough supplementation of endoderm and mesoderm was obtained then for a second generation regenerative therapy with embryonic stem cells could be developed [15].

7. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for Parkinson's disease

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disease that damaged the dopamine DA neurons [102] and regenerative medicine based on the stem cells holds the promise to stop, slowing down and reverse this disease by using mesenchymal, adult, induced pluripotent and embryonic stem cells. Recently it was discovered that in the stem cells that were transplanted to cure parkinson's disease, the dopamine (DA) expression was controlled by internal cellular mechanism and environmental effects [103].

A method was reported by cho et al to differentiate the neurons that were derived from human embryonic stem cells into mature tyrosine hydroxylase positive (TH+) neurons to cure this disease. Derivation of DA neurons with high efficacy was played a role in the efficient therapy as well as in the prevention of tumor formation by residual stem cells [104].

It was reported that when transplantation of DA neurons, derived from human embryonic stem cells, occurred into the patients that have severe parkinson's disease the improvements were seen as transplanted cells were able to survive. Its clinical consequences were reported in younger patients as compared to older ones [105]. In laboratory experiments, astrocytes, neurons and oligodendrocytes were produced from neuronal stem cells (NSCs) that were extracted from ventral mesencephalon (VM) [106].

Transduction method by retroviruses was reported to differentiate the induced pluripotent stem cells of mouse into DA neurons. These stem cells were gone to different parts of the brain and formed neurons as well as ganglia when introduced into ventricles of embryonic cerebral [107]. Viruses were posed a risk that they introduced the cells randomly in genome and can changed the induced pluripotent differentiation [108].

Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) have ability to produced neuronal cells [109] as they have the ability to produce the dopaminergic neurons [110]. It was also reported that MSCs were able to produce some specific neuronal transcriptional factors (NTFs) along with the markers of neurons [111]. Enhancement in the neurons survival by these NTFs was also examined as these NTFs were involved in regeneration of nerve fiber and endogenous cell proliferation [112]. Immunoregulatory actions were also proved by MSCs [113]. MSCs produced some soluble factors for their immune suppressive activity [114]. So, neuroprotection activity was expected from MSCs and improvements were reported by using MSCs [115, 116].

8. Stem cells as regenerative medicines for Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is the disorder of the bone and characterized by loss of bone mass due to resorption of bone by osteoclast. Stem cells based regenerative therapies to cure this disease were based on the application of adult stem cells, embryonic stem cells and induced pluripotent stem cells. Stem cells that were derived from adipocytes and from dental pulp were also used for bone repair [117].

Osteoporosis has severe effects on older people due to loss in the function of osteoclast with age and the reduction of mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) in bone marrow. So, MSCs based regenerative therapy was used to treat this [118]. A little work was done on the regenerative therapy of osteoporosis based on stem cells [119]. First regenerative therapy that was reported to cure osteoporosis was based on MSCs application [120]. MSCs were played vital role in the treatment of osteoporosis by inhibiting the adipogenesis and increasing the ratio of osteogenesis by increasing the potential of osteoblast [121].

It was reported that integrins produced by the osteoprogenitors were target by peptidomimetic ligands to treat the osteoporosis [122]. A synthetic peptidomimetic ligand named LLP2A-Ale for integrin $\alpha4\beta1$ was used to direct the MSCs for the formation of new bone as well as to increase the strength of bone [123, 124].

9. Stem cells as regenerative medicines to cure the injury of Spinal cord

Injury of spinal cord was resulted in the loss of glia and neurons as well as loss in their function. Stem cells derived from human exfoliated deciduous teeth (SHEDs) and dental pulp stem cells of human (DPSCs) were reported in the prevention of apoptosis of neurons, glia and dendrocytes along with the regeneration of axons and myelin

sheath protection. Mostly dental pulp stem cells were examined in the functional recovery after spinal cord injury [125].

It was reported that function was recovered after spinal cord injury by intracerebral introduction of SHEDs along with the conditioned media that was also derived from SHEDs and involved in anti inflammatory activity [126].

Extension of co-cultured neurons with glia was reported by the production of neurotropic factors that was released from SHEDs and DPSCs [127, 128]. The prevention of myelin sheath and filaments of neurons that were present in the surrounding of lesion's epicenter was reported by the implementation of SHEDs which inhibited the neuron and dendrocytes apoptosis [127, 129]. SHEDs were also reported in the prevention of apoptosis of astrocytes [128]. Neurospheres formation was reported in laboratory experiments by using the undifferentiated stem cells of human and rat dental pulp [130, 131]. It was examined that DPSCs were differentiated into active neuron in a laboratory experiment and into neuron like cells in an *in vivo* experiment [132].

10. Stem cells as regenerative medicines in plastic and reconstructive surgery

First published study of reconstructive surgery was on the repair of severe calvarial defect by the application of autologous adipose derived stem cells [133].

Adipose derived stem cells (ADSCs) were reported to hold promise in the plastic surgery of breasts leading to their reconstruction and augmentation. These cells has also been reported in the augmentation of soft tissue, to improve the mark of misshapenness due to trauma and to improve the anomalies of congenital and abrasion due to cancer [134]. It was examined that ADSCs were involved in the formation of new blood vessels as well as to heal the skin that was damaged due to wound or skin ulcer [135]. It was reported that when skin flap was subjected to ADSCs then its survival rate was enhanced directly by the differentiation of ADSCs into cells of endothelia and indirectly by the releasing of growth factors for the formation of new blood vessels [136, 137]. For differentiation of ADSCs, cell assisted lipotransfer technique was used to improve the hemifacial degeneration, augmentation and reconstruction of breasts [138, 139].

Mesenchymal stem cells and ADSCs were proved beneficial to reduce the complications due to radiations [140].

11. Stem cells as regenerative medicines in the generation of beta cells

Diabetes is a disorder that is characterized by a state of hyperglycemia due to improper functioning and production of insulin. Human embryonic stem cells (HESCs) and human induced pluripotent stem cells (HIPSCs) were proved as potential candidates in the regeneration of pancreatic cells with high efficacy. These produced cells were non-functional and called first transition population. Second transition populations of functional pancreatic cells were produced by human pluripotent stem cells (HPSCs) [141]. Different methods were developed to produce beta cells in laboratory by using HPSCs [142-146].

It was reported that exocrine pancreatic cells as well as endocrine pancreatic cells were produced from progenitor cells that were already present in the epithelium of pancreas [147-150]. These progenitors of pancreas were identified on the basis of four transcription factors namely *nkx6.1*, *ptf1a*, *pdx1* and *sox9* [147, 148, 151-153]. Role of *ptf1a* was identified in exocrine lineage while the role of *nkx6.1* and *pdx1* was identified in the whole process of the development and maturation of beta cells [154].

In an *in vivo* experiment it was identified that in an immunocompromised mouse model the functional beta cells could be produced [155]. In laboratory experiments D'Amour and colleagues were produced pancreatic cells very first time to produce the pancreatic hormone [156]. Method of D'Amour and colleagues was modified by a number of groups to produce the pancreatic cells by HIPSCs and HESCs [157-168].

12. Stem cells as regenerative medicine for craniofacial

Craniofacial problems are cleft palate and cleft lip, microtia of ear, periodontal diseases, microsomia and cancer of neck etc. although these are not common but create severe troublesome in the field of medical and surgery. Therapies based on stem cells especially on the mesenchymal stem cells that were derived from bone marrow have potential as regenerative medicine to treat these problems [169].

13. Stem cells as regenerative medicine for Craniomaxillofacial Reconstruction

Look of a human, its social interaction and processes that supportive for life as well as the senses delivery depends upon the correct structure and function of craniomaxillofacial. Loss in the tissues of craniomaxillofacial is due to inflammatory responses. Pluripotent stem cells were proved as valuable candidates for regeneration and reconstruction [170].

It was examined that mesenchymal stem cells were helpful to treat the defects of skull [171, 172] and stem cells derived from adipose tissues were novel for reconstruction of maxillary [173]. For the reconstruction of mandibular, mesenchymal stem cells and stem cells derived from adipose tissues were promising candidates [174,

175].

14. Conclusion

It is concluded that stem cells are potential sources that are used as regenerative medicines to cure the injuries and to regenerate the damaged organs and tissues with high efficacy to bring back the normal function of the organs that support life. Among all stem cells, adipose derived stem cells and mesenchymal stem cells have wide applications in regenerative medicines. Induced pluripotent stem cells eliminate the need of embryonic stem cells. Some tissues and organs also have niches of stem cells that are proved vital in the repairing of that specific organ or tissue. Successful work has been reported to cure the all above mentioned injuries and diseases and in some categories further experimentation is required. It is confirmed that the future of regenerative medicines based on stem cells to cure the fatal diseases is very bright.

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Figures

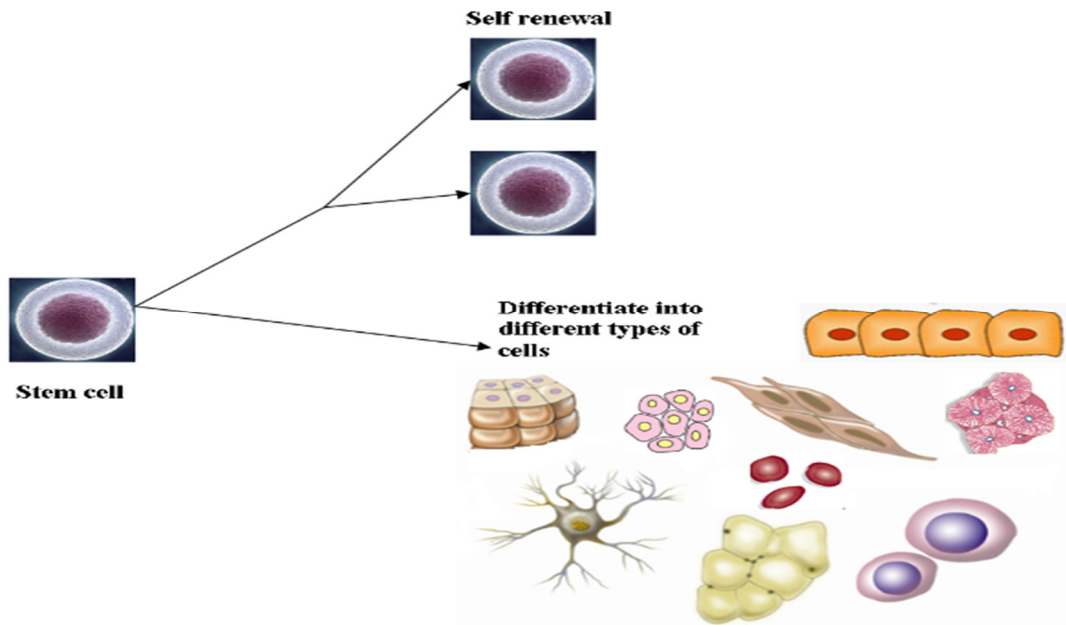


Figure 1: Figure 1 describing what is stem cells

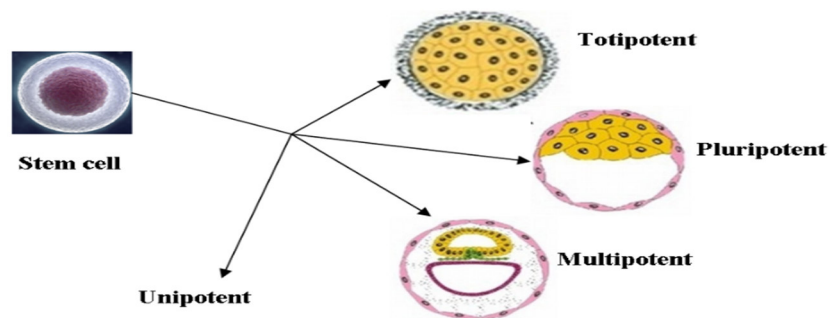


Figure 2: Types of stem cells on the basis of their differentiation ability

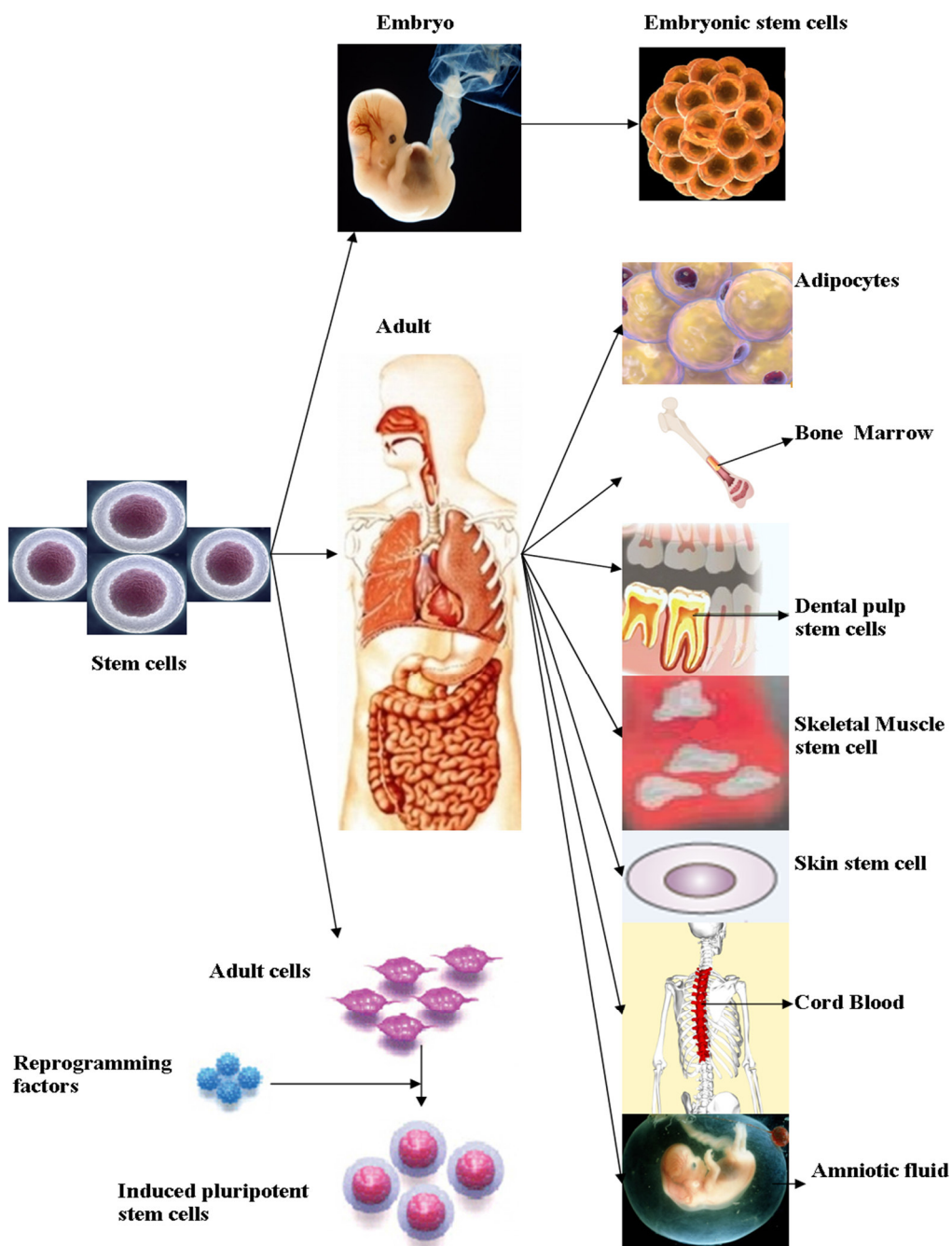


Figure 3: Stem cells, their sources and their types according to sources

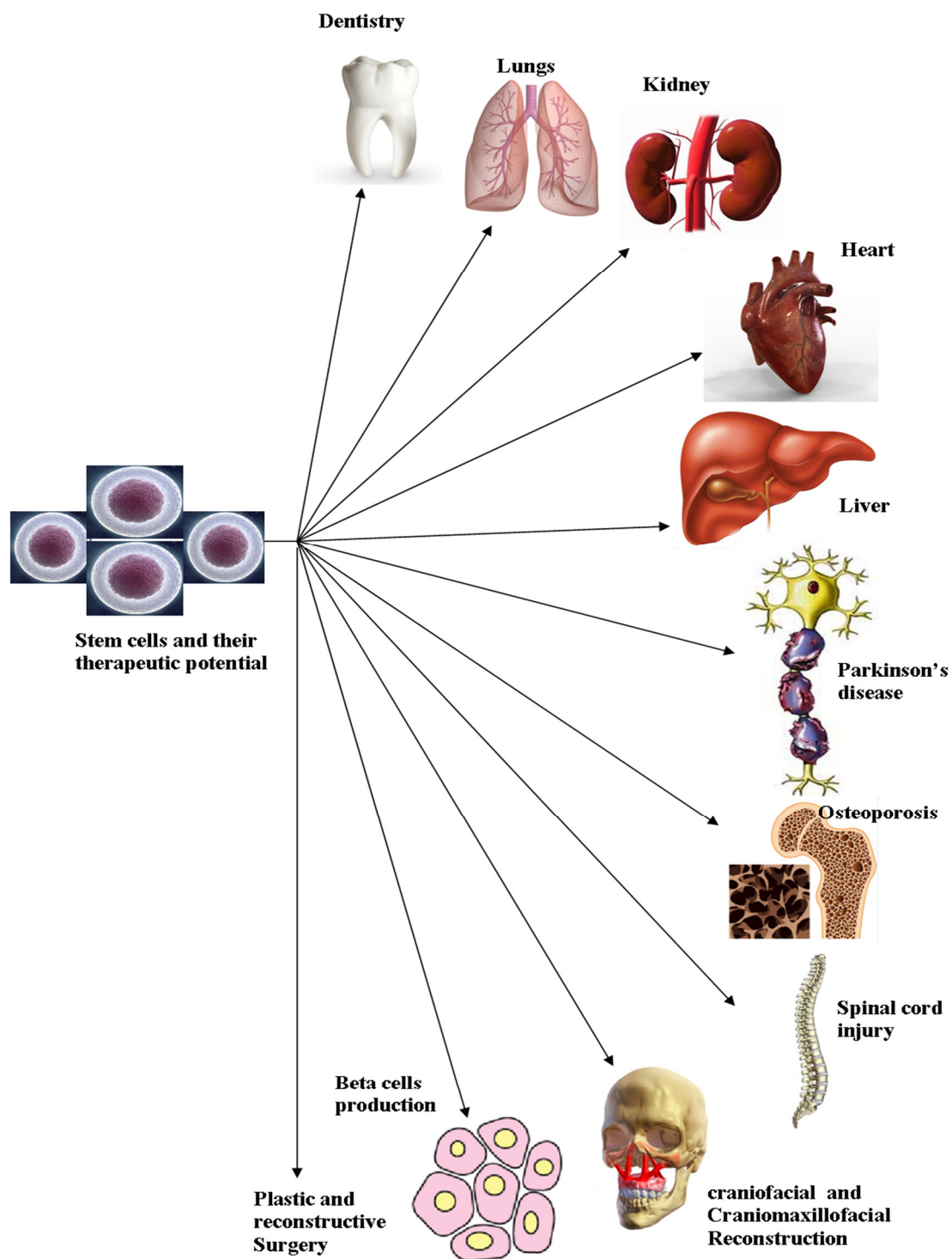


Figure 4:Regenerative potential of stem cells