

YouGov / Daily Telegraph Survey Results

YouGov questioned 2432 adults aged 18+ throughout Britain online between 19th and 24th August 2005

Total	Gender		Age			Social Grade	
	Male	Female	18 to 34	35-54	Over 55	ABC1	C2DE
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

At the moment abortion is legal in Britain up to the 24th week of pregnancy. However, doctors can now save the lives of premature babies born as early as 23 weeks. From what you know, what do you think the legal limit for abortions should be?

Up to birth (40 weeks)	2	4	1	3	2	2	2	3
Up to 24 weeks as now	25	32	18	26	24	24	29	20
Up to 20 weeks	30	24	35	28	32	29	31	29
Up to 12 weeks	19	14	24	20	20	17	17	21
Less than 12 weeks	9	6	11	9	9	9	7	11
Abortions should not be legal at all	6	6	6	4	5	9	6	7
Don't know	9	14	4	11	8	9	7	11

Apart from the question of what the exact legal limit should be, do you think it is too difficult or too easy for women to obtain abortions in Britain, or are the present arrangements broadly satisfactory?

Too difficult	3	4	3	6	2	3	4	3
Too easy	30	25	34	23	30	35	26	34
Present arrangements are broadly satisfactory	51	51	50	51	54	48	55	46
Abortions should not be legal at all	3	3	2	2	2	4	2	3
Don't know	14	17	11	19	13	10	13	15

From what you know, do you think some women do not protect themselves adequately against unwanted pregnancies and instead use abortion as a means of birth control?

Yes, a lot do	24	20	28	19	24	28	22	26
Yes, some do, but not many	55	54	56	56	56	54	57	53
No, almost none do	12	14	10	16	12	8	13	10
Don't know	9	12	7	10	8	10	8	10

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%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you, or do you not, believe that abortion should be free on demand on the NHS?

Yes, it should be free on demand	41	42	40	53	42	29	45	35
No, it should not be free on demand	48	48	48	34	47	61	45	52
Don't know	11	10	12	13	11	10	10	13

British scientists are legally permitted to carry out a limited range of experiments using early human embryos up to 14 days after conception (at which point they are a cluster of about 2,000 cells).

Do you believe that it is, or is not, acceptable to use 'spare' early embryos left over from fertility treatment, such as IVF, for the purposes of medical research?

Yes, it is acceptable	68	75	61	69	67	68	72	63
No, it is not	20	15	25	18	21	21	18	23
Don't know	12	11	14	14	12	11	10	15

Do you believe that it is, or is not, acceptable to create human embryos deliberately solely for the purposes of medical research?

Yes, it is acceptable	41	53	30	43	39	40	44	37
No, it is not	46	35	56	40	48	48	45	47
Don't know	14	13	14	17	13	12	12	16

Do you agree or disagree that the rights of patients with diseases such as cancer are more important than the rights of early embryos?

Agree - the rights of patients are more important than the rights of early embryos	66	70	61	63	66	67	68	63
Disagree - the rights of patients are NOT more important than the rights of early embryos	15	13	17	14	15	17	15	15
Don't know	19	17	21	23	19	16	17	23

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In your view, should there be laws regulating the use of early embryos for medical research, or should the issue of whether or not they are used for research be a matter solely for the embryos' parents?

There should be laws regulating the use of embryos	66	68	64	59	68	71	70	61
Their use should be solely a matter for the parents	25	22	27	28	24	22	23	27
Don't know	9	9	9	13	8	7	7	12

For what purposes, if any, do you think it is acceptable to use early embryos for medical research?

For any medical condition, such as infertility or short sightedness	23	31	16	32	21	17	26	19
Only for life-threatening diseases, such as cancer or heart disease, whether in adults or children	48	45	51	40	50	53	50	47
Only for life-threatening diseases affecting CHILDREN, such as leukaemia and immune deficiencies	6	5	7	6	6	7	5	8
It is never acceptable to use early embryos in medical research	11	8	14	6	12	14	10	13
Don't know	11	11	12	16	10	8	9	14

Which of these statements comes closest to your own view?

'Human embryos are human beings from the moment of conception and should be given the same legal protection as new-born babies'	16	13	19	12	16	19	13	19
'Embryos are not really human beings from the moment of conception, but there should nevertheless be laws governing the uses to which they are put'	58	56	59	57	61	55	63	51
'Until the first signs of a nervous system appear two weeks after conception, embryos are not human beings and therefore do not need any legal protection'	17	20	13	18	14	17	16	17
Don't know	10	11	9	13	9	8	8	13

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Cloning is the creation of a human, an animal or a plant from a single 'parent'. The clone is a 'carbon copy' of its parent, with identical genetic make-up.

Assuming the cloning of babies was proved safe for both the baby and the woman carrying it, which of the following statements comes closest to your own view?

Such cloning should be allowed by law for any purposes that would otherwise be legal	10	14	6	11	10	8	11	8
Such cloning should be allowed by law only for reproductive purposes - to help infertile couples have children	20	23	16	22	17	20	19	21
Such cloning should not be allowed by law for any purposes for the foreseeable future.	30	28	32	28	29	32	34	25
Such cloning should never be allowed by law	30	24	35	25	33	30	27	33
Don't know	11	11	11	14	11	9	8	14

Some scientists plan to use cloned early human embryos as a source of 'stem cells' – the flexible parent cells that produce every kind of tissue in the body. By growing embryo stem cells, these scientists hope to create unlimited supplies of tissue to treat diseases such as diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and heart disease.

In your view, when, if ever, is the use of stem cells in this way acceptable?

For any medical purpose including cosmetic purposes	7	11	4	12	6	5	8	7
For any medical purpose but excluding cosmetic purposes	27	32	23	29	26	27	29	25
To help treat all serious diseases, such as diabetes and arthritis	25	26	25	21	25	29	28	22
To help treat only life-threatening diseases, such as cancer and heart disease	20	15	24	19	21	19	17	23
The use of stem cells in this way is never acceptable	9	7	12	5	10	12	9	9
Don't know	11	9	13	14	11	8	9	13

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Some people say they do not feel well enough informed about the relevant science to make decisions about things like cloning and stem-cell research. Do you PERSONALLY feel you are well enough informed or not?

Yes, I think I am well enough informed	33	39	28	29	33	37	38	27
No, I don't think I am well enough informed	60	53	66	61	61	57	56	64
Don't know	7	8	7	10	6	7	6	9

Some scientists are predicting that one day doctors will be able to modify babies' genetic make-up before they are born. On what grounds, if any, should they be allowed to do this?

They should be allowed to modify babies' genes for almost any reason – for example, to improve the child's chances of doing well academically or to boost their sporting ability	2	4	1	4	2	1	2	2
They should be allowed to do so only to reduce the risks of the child going on in later life to develop diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's disease and heart disease	26	36	18	26	27	26	29	23
They should be allowed to do so only to prevent the child suffering from serious genetic diseases and disorders	43	36	50	40	44	46	44	43
Scientists should not be allowed for any reason to modify babies' genetic make-up before they are born	20	16	24	17	21	22	19	22
Don't know	8	8	7	12	5	6	6	10

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Suppose genetic modification turns out to be both safe and effective. For which, if any, of the following purposes would you yourself consider taking advantage of the procedure for your own future children? [Please tick all that apply]

To prevent them as children from suffering from serious genetic diseases or disorders	57	56	58	60	57	55	60	54
To reduce the risk of their going on in later life to develop diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's disease and heart disease	43	54	34	48	43	40	46	40
To improve their chances of doing well academically or to boost their sporting ability	4	8	1	8	4	3	5	4
Other purposes	3	5	1	6	2	1	3	3
Don't know	9	10	9	12	8	8	8	11
I would not consider genetic modification for any reason	18	13	22	17	19	19	16	20

Do you agree or disagree that parents should be allowed to select the sex of their own children if they so wish?

Yes, they should be allowed to	14	17	11	16	12	14	14	13
No, they should not	77	74	80	72	81	77	78	76
Don't know	9	9	9	12	7	9	8	11

Should parents and doctors be allowed to carry out genetic tests on embryos created during IVF treatment in order to select those with the lowest chances of developing diseases such as cancer and heart disease in later life?

Yes, they should be allowed to	51	58	44	53	49	51	56	46
No, they should not	30	25	35	28	32	31	30	31
Don't know	18	17	20	19	19	17	14	24

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Some parents want to use IVF treatment to create 'saviour siblings' – babies whose umbilical-cord blood could be used to save the life of a sick brother or sister. Should parents and doctors be allowed to carry out genetic tests on IVF embryos before they are transplanted into the mother's womb in order to select suitable blood donors for a sick sibling?

Yes, they should be allowed to do that	58	56	59	52	57	62	61	54
No, they should not	22	23	21	21	23	21	23	20
Don't know	21	21	20	27	19	16	16	26

Do you agree or disagree that people who are terminally ill should have the right to decide when they want to die and to ask for medical assistance to help them die if they are unable to end their own lives?

Yes, they should have that right	87	86	88	86	90	85	87	87
No, they should not	8	8	7	7	6	9	8	7
Don't know	6	6	5	7	3	6	5	6

Do you agree or disagree that people should be allowed, without fear of prosecution, to assist the suicides of close relatives who are terminally ill?

Yes, they should be allowed	67	67	66	66	71	62	67	66
No, they should not	21	23	20	20	19	25	22	20
Don't know	12	11	14	13	10	13	11	14

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Euthanasia is the act of ending the life of an individual suffering from a terminal illness or an incurable condition – either by intervention (e.g. lethal injection) or by the suspension of medical treatment.

Some people say that allowing euthanasia would have one or more undesirable consequences. Which, if any, of the following undesirable consequences do you think it would have? [Please tick all that apply]

Old people might feel under pressure to seek euthanasia	51	52	50	48	49	55	55	45
It would lead to the commission of a significant number of murders disguised as mercy killings	47	44	51	51	47	45	49	45
It would lead to worse care for the terminally ill	21	21	21	15	19	28	22	20
It would discourage the search for new treatments for life-threatening diseases	11	11	11	10	9	14	12	10
Don't know	17	15	18	19	18	14	13	21
It would not have any undesirable consequences	14	17	12	12	16	15	14	15

Apart from the issue of euthanasia, and thinking perhaps of a patient in a permanent coma, please consider whether there is a significant moral difference between the following two scenarios:

1. A doctor hastening such a patient's death by withdrawing a feeding tube

2. A doctor hastening that same patient's death by giving him or her a fatal dose of morphine

Do you or do you not believe there is a significant moral difference between these two scenarios?

Yes, there is a significant moral difference	37	35	39	36	36	40	37	37
No, there is not	54	57	52	54	55	54	56	52
Don't know	9	8	9	11	9	6	6	11

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Thinking back to the questions relating to new medical research and techniques, which of the following statements comes closer to your own view?

It will be possible to keep the lid on and to limit the uses to which these new techniques are put – for example, by preventing doctors from using stem cells for purely cosmetic purposes	31	34	28	36	29	29	33	28
It will not be possible to keep the lid on: once these new techniques are available, there will be no way of successfully controlling how they are used	52	51	53	43	55	57	53	52
Don't know	17	14	18	21	16	13	14	20

Some people say that scientists are so keen to achieve major breakthroughs in medical research that they give too little thought to the moral issues involved. From what you know, are you inclined to agree or disagree with this view?

I am inclined to agree	59	56	63	53	60	64	58	61
I am inclined to disagree	27	32	22	29	27	26	32	21
Don't know	14	12	15	18	14	10	10	18