



CCRM

Centre for Commercialization of **Regenerative** Medicine

Media Release

Will we see a Captain America in our lifetime?

Experts debate the ethics & likelihood of “super” humans

October 2, 2014 (Toronto, ON) – Captain America, the [Marvel Comics super hero](#) created during WWII, began life as frail and sickly Steven Rogers who was willingly experimented upon and turned into a “super soldier.” While the “super soldier serum” administered to him in 1941 predates the Canadian discovery of stem cells in the 1960s, modern science is exploring how stem cell-related therapies that will be part of a strategy to treat diseases, may one day be used to enhance human performance.

Richard Pound (former secretary and president of the Canadian Olympic Committee, VP of the International Olympic Committee), **Bartha Knoppers** (lawyer, ethics expert, professor at McGill University), and **Paul Zehr** (neuroscientist and professor at the University of Victoria, author *Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero*) will explore and debate some of the regulatory and ethical issues around using regenerative medicine to enhance our bodies beyond what is considered “normal,” at the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine’s first Café Scientifique: Bigger, Better, Faster, Stronger – Are Stem Cells the Answer?

“There is a tremendous amount of research and attention being paid to developing stem cells to their maximum potential to revolutionize health care and transform how diseases are being treated,” says Peter Zandstra, CSO of the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM) and University of Toronto professor. “Athletes are already turning to stem cell treatments to repair injuries and the potential for misuse – or stem cell ‘doping’ – in elite sporting events exists today. CCRM has assembled an Olympic-worthy team of experts to discuss this issue.”

“Bigger, Better, Faster, Stronger – Are Stem Cells the Answer?” is a free event for the public that will take place today at the Hard Rock Café (upstairs), 279 Yonge St., at Dundas Square in Toronto. Doors open at 5 p.m. and the event will run from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

This event is hosted by CCRM and supported with a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Dr. Peter Zandstra will act as Master of Ceremonies. Please follow the event on Twitter using #CCRMCAFE.

About the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM)

CCRM, a Canadian not-for-profit organization funded by the Government of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence program and six academic partners, supports the development of technologies that accelerate the commercialization of stem cell- and biomaterials-based technologies and therapies. A network of academics, industry and entrepreneurs, CCRM aims to translate scientific discoveries into marketable products for patients. CCRM launched in Toronto's Discovery District on June 14, 2011. CCRM is hosted by the University of Toronto.

CCRM has three core development themes: cell reprogramming and engineering; cell manufacturing; and, biomaterials and devices to carry out projects commissioned by academia and industry. CCRM has a fully resourced, 6,000 square foot development facility where all development work takes place.

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For more information, please contact:

Stacey Johnson

Director, Communications

Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine

647-309-1830

stacey.johnson@ccrm.ca

www.ccrm.ca