

## SPRING BREAKFAST FORUM

**The Promise of Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine**

Date: Thursday, March 11, 2004

Place: Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall  
The Rockefeller University  
York Avenue at 66th Street  
New York CityTime: 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. Registration &  
Breakfast Buffet  
8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Program

At a time when biomedical science is making unprecedented strides to improve human health, many people consider the study of stem cells to be the most promising research of all.

Stem cells are the precursors that give rise to virtually every type of cell in the body. Before birth, these essential cells differentiate to become skin and muscle, eye, brain, heart and bone. Even in adulthood, stem cells are crucial for renewing many tissues, although the stem cells in an adult body are much less versatile than those that first shaped it.

A primary goal of stem cell research today is learning how to repair diseased or damaged organs, laying the foundation for the new field of regenerative medicine. Stem cell-based therapies hold particular hope for treating diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, spinal cord injury and such neurodegenerative disorders as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

**The Scientists**

The Women & Science Breakfast Forum will feature **Ali Brivanlou**, a leader in the international effort to understand the intricacies of human stem cells and harness their therapeutic potential. Recently, Dr. Brivanlou and colleagues discovered a compound that prevents cultured embryonic stem cells from differentiating, thereby maintaining their readiness to develop into any cell type. A first step toward safely cultivating stem cells for medical use, this breakthrough also provides insight into the mechanisms responsible for stem cell self-renewal.

Dr. Brivanlou, a developmental biologist, has played a key role in setting scientific standards for embryonic stem cell research and in defining which embryonic cells are true stem cells. His many honors include a Klingenstein Fellowship and a Presidential Early Career Award, the U.S. government's highest recognition for young scientists.

The program will be hosted by Rockefeller's new president, Nobel laureate Paul Nurse, who shared the 2001 prize in medicine for research that revealed "new possibilities in cancer treatment." Formerly chief executive of Cancer Research UK, Dr. Nurse is a fellow of The Royal Society and a recipient of an Albert Lasker Award. In 1999 he received knighthood for his contributions to cell biology and cancer research.