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By [Kathleen Gallagher](#)

## Stem cell pioneer Thomson starts new firm

**Madison** -- Stem cell pioneer James Thomson and two others have started a second company that aims to grow platelets and red blood cells from embryonic stem cells.

The company, called Stem Cell Products Inc., believes it has a chance to be among the first in the world to bring an embryonic stem cell-related therapeutic to market.

The path to a product will likely be less challenging because platelets and red blood cells contain no DNA, has limited lifespans in the body, and do not replicate, Thomson said at a news conference this morning.

Gov. Jim Doyle announced at the conference the state has awarded Stem Cell Products Inc. \$1 million in technology development grants and loans.

The military is interested in the technology Stem Cell Products is developing. Currently, the military flies wounded soldiers in Iraq to hospitals in Germany so they can have access to platelets, according to Doyle.

Co-founders of Stem Cell Products with Thomson are University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers Igor Slukvin and Dong Chen, and venture capital firm Tactics II Ventures.