

NEWS

Video: Why make neurons from children with autism?

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It sounds like science fiction: turning skin cells into brain cells in the lab. But in the past four years, stem cell researchers have figured out the ingredients of the chemical soup needed to reprogram skin cells into stem cells, which can, in turn, be differentiated into a host of different cell types.

Ricardo Dolmetsch, assistant professor of neurobiology at Stanford University, is one of the pioneers in this field. He is trying to create neurons using induced pluripotent stem cells from people with Timothy syndrome, a rare single-gene disorder that causes heart arrhythmias, intellectual impairment and social and communicative problems typically seen in autism.

On Wednesday morning at the **Society for Neuroscience annual meeting** in San Diego, Dolmetsch talked to SFARI about why this approach should be applied to autism research. "Because autism is a human disease, I think it's important to study it in the context of human neuronal development," he said.

For more reports from the 2010 Society for Neuroscience annual meeting, please [click here](#).