

Leukaemia patient (Against)

I have a type of cancer that affects my blood. It can be treated by a stem cell transplant, but the donor and I need to be genetically compatible otherwise it won't work. I've heard that some parents want to split the embryos they produce and store one so they can have a second child later on to act as a genetically compatible organ or tissue donor in case the first one has serious health problems, or even to provide a second copy of a child in case the first one dies. Even though something like that could save my life, I think keeping an identical twin in storage for years only to be born because it's needed is wrong.

Fact: The creation of a 'saviour sibling' has been legally allowed in the UK since 2004. The process has been used a number of times to allow families affected by rare genetic conditions to have another child who is not only free from the disease, but also a tissue match for an affected older sibling. It is still illegal to create an artificial twin.

Issue: An identical twin shouldn't be kept in storage as an embryo so that it could be born for the sole purpose of donating organs and tissues.

Question: How would you choose which embryo to implant first and which to store to be born only to save the life of the first?