

Judaism Bioethics

- All Jewish law – *Halacha* – is found in the Torah and is very brief
- *Halacha* is explained in the Oral Law which is known as the Mishnah. These laws are further interpreted and explained in the Gemara. The sacred text known as the Talmud contains both the Mishnah and the Gemara
- Any new field which affects one's life will be interpreted by rabbis of the *Beit Din* and decisions will be made after careful study of the Torah and the Talmud
- There are four golden rules of bioethics:
 1. Do not kill
 2. Each individual life is of infinite value and no one person's life is more valuable than another
 3. One's life belongs to God
 4. There is a duty on all to save life and heal the sick
- There are three main Jewish bioethical principles: human life has infinite value; ageing, illness and death are a natural part of life; the improvement of the patient's life is a constant commitment
- The right to withhold treatment, to commit suicide, to have an abortion when the mother's life or health is not at risk, and/or to perform euthanasia, are all overridden by the duty of Jews to treat illness, preserve health and life
- Abortion
- IVF – 'be fruitful and multiply' – Genesis 1
- Euthanasia
- Stem cell research
- Organ transplant

Bibliography

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