



## Ethical and intellectual property in the biological sciences.

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Abstract: Ethical concerns on patents in the biological sciences are increased by the prospect of patents for higher life forms. A Canadian patent grants the owner the right to exclude others in Canada from making, using, or selling or offering for sale his or her invention for the term of the patent; however, it does not give the patent owner any positive rights to do likewise. As with other forms of property, the right to make, use, or sell a patented invention may be regulated by other laws or guidelines. In Canada, higher life forms, medical and surgical methods are not patentable subject matter. Unicellular life forms and subcellular material are considered patentable. Decisions on ethical issues are not considered by patent officers. The Patent Office is guided only by legislation. Other regulations by the legislatures can direct public policy and minimize risks.

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