

Doctors took Henrietta's cells without her informed consent during her cancer treatments. " ... Wharton [a doctor] picked up a sharp knife and showed two dime-sized pieces of tissue from Henrietta's cervix: one from her tumor, and one from the healthy cervical tissue nearby." Years later, two women sued Hopkins for "knowingly exposing] their children to lead and hadn't informed them even when their blood tests showed that they had abnormal lead levels." Henrietta's case was used on appeal and the case was settled.

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This is important because Henrietta's case could be used to further the enforcement of informed consent in medicine, as seen in the lawsuit. Her case can serve as a comparison if future lawsuits about the same types of problems occur again, which will make hospitals more willing to enforce consent so they don't get sued.