Fetus in Fetu

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Fetus in fetu is a rare variety of parasitic twins, where the developmentally abnormal parasitic twin is completely encapsulated within the torso of the otherwise normally developed host twin. In the late eighteenth century, German anatomist Johann Friedrich Meckel was the first to described fetus in fetu, which translates to “fetus within fetus.” Fetus in fetu is thought to result from the unequal division of the totipotent inner cell mass, the mass of cells that is the ancestral precursor to all cells in the body. The unequal division is thought to occur during the formation of the blastocyst, which can also result in parasitic and conjoined twins. Fetus in fetu represents a developmental anomaly that has prompted developmental biologists to further examine the mechanisms for how twins arise.

Subject

Meckel, Johann Friedrich, 1724-1774  Fetus Embryos Fetal development Pregnancy Fetus--Abnormalities

Topic

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