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Dr. Yu is one of the world's leading experts in human induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell technology, focusing on reprogramming adult cells to a fully pluripotent state and then differentiating them into any cell type in the body. Her breakthrough research enables the creation of stem cells from any individual, thus driving forward regenerative medicine and personalized therapeutics, as well as circumnavigates the ethical issues surrounding embryonic stem cells. Yu was lead author on the first-ever paper published on human iPS cell research in November 2007 and a second major milestone paper on vector-free human iPS cell research published in March 2009, both in the top journal *Science*. In 2003 she joined the UW-Madison lab of Dr. James Thomson, stem cell pioneer and the first to isolate human embryonic stem cells, and she has published 20 articles related to stem cell research. Dr. Yu received her Ph.D. in cell and molecular biology from the University of Pennsylvania in 2002. She graduated at the top of her class in 1997 from Peking University, Beijing, China, where she earned her B.S. in plant molecular and developmental biology.

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