

# Coral Gables

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Camillo Ricordi, MD

Director of the UM Diabetes Research Institute



**Latest Endeavor:** Working to expand the cure he developed for Type 1 diabetes

**Backstory:** Camillo Ricordi is recognized as one of the world's leading researchers in regenerative medicine (he most recently addressed the prestigious World Stem Cell Summit on "Stem Cell Innovations That Will Change the World"). His Nobel-worthy discovery was how to transplant insulin-producing islet cells from a donor pancreas into the liver of recipients with Type 1 diabetes, reversing the disease. A 10-year FDA trial validating the procedure was completed last year.



**What He Says:** "The biggest challenge now is to overcome the auto-immune reaction, so right now we are limited to the most severe cases," he says. "The ultimate cure will be to induce immune tolerance. If you can do it without anti-rejection drugs, there will be huge demand," he says, including 1.2 million Americans with Type 1 diabetes, a genetic disorder that prevents the pancreas from producing insulin. As a leading advocate for regenerative medicine, he believes there may be a way for patients to heal themselves. "We are also doing research to induce the production of islets from the patients themselves, to regenerate new cells. That will be a healthcare economic revolution..."