

# Life in 2060

An international group of 40 scientists have made some very surprising predictions about the future. They say that in the next 50 years the way we live will change beyond our wildest dreams. Here are some of their predictions. You may find some of them surprising. Bea Rosenthal reports.



## 1 Life expectancy

Within 50 years, living to a 100 while still enjoying active, healthy lives will be the norm. Professor Richard Miller of the University of Michigan says:

‘ We will be able to do the same for humans.’ So with regular injections, centenarians will be as vigorous as today’s 60-year-olds. Women will be able to give birth well into old age; their biological clocks could be extended by 10 years.

## 2 Growing body parts

Professor Ellen Heber-Katz says: ‘People will take for granted that injured or diseased organs can be repaired in much the same way as we fix a car.  Damaged parts will be replaced. Within 50 years whole-body replacement will be routine.’ But doctors will need huge supplies of organs for transplant. Where will they come from? Scientists say these could be grown inside animals from human cells.



### 3 Understanding the brain

We don't yet know how the brain gives us our awareness of being alive. 'But,' says Professor Susan Greenfield of Oxford University, 'in 50 years' time we may have a clearer idea of how the brain generates consciousness.' Studies of the brain and the nature of consciousness will bring much greater understanding of disorders such as schizophrenia and depression. [REDACTED] Other scientists go further than Professor Greenfield. They believe that by 2060 computers will develop their own consciousness and emotions. Human beings may eventually be replaced by computers in some areas of life.

### 4 Understanding animals

Thanks to a device which can 'read' emotions, feelings, and thoughts, we will be able to 'talk' to animals. The story of \*Dr Dolittle will be fact, not fiction. 'This could first work with primates, then mammals, then other vertebrates, including fish,' says Professor Daniel Pauly from Canada. '[REDACTED]', so we might all become vegetarian.'

\* fictional character for children

### 5 Discovering aliens

A number of scientists predict that the biggest breakthrough in the next 50 years will be the discovery of extra-terrestrial beings. Dr Chris McKay of NASA says: 'We may find evidence of alien life frozen in the ancient permafrost on Mars.' Scientists hope that the current interest in space missions to this planet means that there is every chance of making [REDACTED] Dr McKay also believes that evidence of alien life forms may even be found here on Earth.



## 6 Parallel universes

Advances in quantum physics will prove that there are parallel universes. In fact there may be an infinite number of them. These universes will contain space, time, and some of them may even contain you in a slightly different form. For years parallel universes only existed in the works of science fiction, but now Professor Max Tegmark says: '\_\_\_\_\_':

## 7 Our homes

What might our houses be like in the second half of the 21st century? This is Professor Greenfield's prediction:

As you enter the living room, sensors will detect your presence and the walls will start to glow. Talk to the walls and, activated by your voice, they will change to a colour of your choice, 'pink' to 'green' to 'blue', whatever suits your mood.

Sink into your glowing cyber-armchair, relax in the knowledge that the house computer will perform all your everyday household tasks. The voice system in the chair will address you by name and advise a change in position that will be better for your spine.

In the kitchen, \_\_\_\_\_ and it will automatically send orders to the supermarket. However, it is in the kitchen where 'new' meets 'old'. Food remains in its old-fashioned form. Pills, so confidently predicted in the 20th-century to replace food, exist, but nobody wants them. There is too much pleasure in cooking, chewing and tasting all kinds of food.

### Finally

Predicting the future has occupied mankind for generations. However, not always successfully. The huge influence of many of today's technical marvels, such as the Internet or mobile phones, was never predicted.