

AN APPLICATION OF EUTELY

The science of aging is called **gerontology** (Gr. *gerontos*, old man). The eutelic characteristics of aschelminths makes them excellent research animals for studies on aging because (1) none of the cells of aschelminths are being continually renewed; (2) aschelminths cannot repair cells; and (3) a specific number of cells is present, and their exact lineage is known. In a eutelic animal, cellular

longevity appears to be a simple, measurable parameter, and the onset of aging can be easily studied. Some of the characteristics of aging that have been studied in these animals include the progressive disorganization of muscle and nerve cells, mitochondrial degeneration, decrease in cellular motility, accumulation of age pigments, and increase in specific gravity.