

The following may aid you in collecting your thoughts to present a clear, concise view for alternate methods of research, but are by no means the only replies to a complicated issue.

🐾 **“Your child or your pet? I am in favor of animal research that might one day save the life of a human being.”**

We don't have to choose between animals and humans. That scare tactic (animals vs. human health) is typically used by people who profit from animal tests and does nothing to foster a rational discussion of the ethically difficult and scientifically complex issue of animal experimentation. Recreating human diseases in animals and then attempting to cure them is not the answer when there are non-animal research methods available.

🐾 **“Sacrificing ten animals could save ten thousand people.”**

Science is not nearly so dramatic; but, even if it were, would it be right to take the lives of ten retarded citizens, for example, to save the lives of ten thousand other people?

🐾 **“Dogs and cats are killed in pounds anyway.”**

True, but typically the animals are put to death in a painless way rather than being subjected to torture and pain before being killed by experimenters.

🐾 **Five major types of alternatives have been developed:**

- 🐾 **Human Studies:** include clinical, epidemiological and postmortem investigations.
- 🐾 **In-Vitro Techniques:** used to study tissues, cells, or cellular components in the controlled environment of laboratory containers.
- 🐾 **Mathematical Models:** describe a biological system under study in mathematical terms in order to predict novel features of that system.
- 🐾 **Less Sentient Organisms:** used on the premise that some organisms have less capacity for pain and suffering than do others; i.e.: invertebrates, microorganisms and plants.
- 🐾 **Physical/Chemical Techniques:** exploit instruments and chemical procedures, not animals, to analyze the physical and chemical properties of drugs, body chemicals, and other compounds.

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Presented by The National Humane Education Society



On Animal Experimentation

A brief guide
to presenting
the humane
viewpoint.



Following are commonly held misinformed claims regarding animal experimentation or vivisection. After each claim, the NHES position is detailed, including tools and evidence to use in arguing for the humane cause.

🐾 “There are peer review and animal care committees at research facilities.”

Most of these committees are composed mainly of people with vested interests in the continuation of animal research. An anesthesiologist at Dr. Francis Medical Center in Topeka, Kansas wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association that "as a member of the university animal-use committee, I was truly appalled by what impressed me as an extremely cold disregard for the value, comfort and welfare of animals. Protocols often used higher vertebrates when lower species could just as well have been used. Researchers rarely educated themselves about alternative models which might have produced equivalent results with less animal suffering... I cannot honestly say I felt the animal-use committee met its obligation to the animals or to society."

🐾 “Non-animal research alternatives are too underdeveloped to be taken seriously.”

Because animal experimentation is established in science, awards, grants, publications tenure, salaries and promotions are all too often tied to their use. Innovative alternatives are underfunded and underexplored. Although we now know, for example, that through human studies virtually all atherosclerotic heart disease is preventable by controlling cholesterol, smoking and high blood pressure; that 30% of cancer is attributable to smoking and that as much as 40% to 60% of cancer is associated with a high-fat, low-fiber diet, preventive interventions are largely ignored. However, there is hope. By placing increased pressure on the research community to seek alternatives to animal experiments, responsible research can be conducted to advance the cause of public health and restore to medicine a respect for all living things.

🐾 “I wouldn’t be alive today if it weren’t for animal-based research.”

Since different species of animals vary enormously in their makeup, much research cannot safely be extrapolated to humans. Animal-based vaccines, for example, have killed people. Progress in blood transfusions was held back because of unsuccessful transfusions between animals and humans. A high mortality rate among humans receiving intravenous anesthesia was also unfortunate proof that animal research did not insure the safety of the method. Animal insulins have sometimes been problematic for humans because the preparations are not totally pure. The list of examples refuting the above statement can easily continue.

🐾 “Medical research would come to a halt without the use of animals.”

Recitations such as this are often rattled off by biomedical researchers in their efforts to discredit the goals of anti-vivisectionists. But medical progress increasingly points to a path away from antiquated animal models. The advent of sophisticated scanning technology, for example, has given scientists the ability to examine whole sections of living patients uninvvasively. Advances in genetics have also revolutionized medicine. Specific markers, genes, and/or proteins have been identified for Alzheimer’s disease, muscular dystrophy, schizophrenia and other inherited disorders. Tissue and cell culture studies are being used to screen anti-cancer and anti-AIDS drugs. The National Disease Research Interchange, a non-profit clearinghouse, provides more than 130 kinds of human tissue to scientists investigating diabetes, cancer, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, glaucoma, retinitis and more than 50 other diseases. Biomedical researchers will continue to make the claim that all major medical advances result from animal research but anti-vivisectionists can refute that claim with numerous references of their own.

🐾 “Animals are protected by the law”

Laws regulating the care of laboratory animals are, in reality, minimal. In an official report, the Office of Technology Assessment, concluded that "current regulations do not affect a substantial percentage of animals used for experimental purposes." Enforcement of these minimal standards is also inadequate. The General Accounting Office studied a year’s worth of Department of Agriculture inspection records and found many sites never inspected at all. Of those that were inspected, 114 had serious violations of animal-care standards. Law enforcement is needed to protect animals.

🐾 “Scientists care about the animals they do research on.”

Today’s “publish or perish” scientific environment has created a system in which studies of questionable relevance to human health are routinely approved. Animals are treated as nothing more than expendable commodities on the most expeditious road to publication. In the words of one scientist currently employed by Cleveland’s Metropolitan General Hospital and Case Western Reserve University Medical School, "The question of inflicting pain is of no relevance today. The inclusion of animals in our ethical system is philosophically meaningless..."

🐾 “The basis of medical history revolves around animal research.”

Throughout medical history, few or no resources have been devoted to non-animal research methods so it is impossible to say where medical research would be if we had declined to experiment on animals. In Britain, it is against the law for medical students to practice surgery on animals, and no one can say that British surgeons are any less skilled than those of the United States. There is no need to repeat history - it is time to move on.