

Animal Use In Research, Testing and Teaching

Advances in the prevention and treatment of disease have depended on accurate knowledge about the causes of disease, information about how disease affects the body, and drugs, medical devices, and surgical procedures that cure disease. The knowledge, materials, and skills on which prevention and treatment of disease are based have come from a variety of scientific and clinical disciplines in human and animal biology and medicine and from experimentation with human and animal subjects. There is, as yet, no way to model the extraordinary complexity of a living organism; and continued progress in the prevention and treatment of disease will depend on human and animal experimentation.

Society must choose between improvements to human and animal health through animal research and restrictions on the use of animals in research that could diminish hope for increasing the quality of life for both animals and man. The decision in favor of continued animal research seems clear; however, there is concern on the part of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine that animals used in research be provided with the highest quality treatment consistent with contemporary standards of care.

The American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine takes the position that the responsible use of animals in biomedical research, testing, and education is essential to the prevention and treatment of diseases of animals and man.

The College recognizes and supports the following principles governing the care and use of animals in research, testing and education:

1. The establishment of an institutional animal care and use committee with representation from the various scientific subdivisions of the institution, a veterinarian qualified in laboratory animal medicine, and a non-scientist concerned with the ethical use of animals in research.
2. The review of proposed animal research projects by the institutional animal care and use committee prior to submission of proposals to funding agencies, or to an internal funding authority, to determine that the proposed research meets ethical considerations and can be conducted effectively.
3. The accreditation of research animal care and use programs by the American Association for the Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, or other verifiable assurances that the animal care and use program meets appropriate standards.
4. The establishment of clear lines of responsibility for institutional animal care and use programs to ensure that these programs are administered

and conducted in accordance with federal, state and local requirements and institutional guidelines regarding animal experimentation.

5. The establishment of workshops, seminars, and training programs designed to increase investigator awareness of public concerns and institutional responsibilities in the use of living animals in research and to teach proper methods in animal technology.

If biomedical research is to continue to advance the frontiers of human and animal health, it must have public support. That support ultimately depends upon public confidence that research using animals is properly and humanely conducted and is productive and beneficial.

This confidence can be sustained as the medical and scientific communities enact aggressive programs of responsibility and accountability for the use of animals in research.