

Cosmetic & Product Testing on Animals



ANIMAL ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Animal Protection through Education and Legislative Advocacy

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Animal Alliance of Canada is committed to the protection of all animals and to the promotion of a harmonious relationship between people, animals and the environment.

Introduction

Every day in North America animals are poisoned, blinded and burned in consumer product tests. Products ranging from mascara, shampoo and nail polish to oven cleaner, ink and children's toys are tested on animals. These tests, which are conducted in the name of protecting consumers, are crude and outdated; they result in pain and suffering for the animals involved, and provide little protection to the consumer.

Eye and Skin Irritancy Tests

The Draize Test, developed in 1944, is used to measure the harmfulness of ingredients contained in household products and cosmetics. The Draize involves dripping the test substance into a rabbit's eye and recording the damage over three to twenty-one days. Scientists use rabbits for these tests because rabbits' eyes have no tear ducts to wash away the irritant, and their eyes are large enough for any inflammation to be clearly visible. Reactions

can vary from slight irritation to ulceration and complete blindness. The rabbits are confined in restraining devices to prevent them from clawing at the injured eye. All of the animals are usually killed at the end of the test period, or "recycled" into toxicity tests.

Problems With Irritancy Tests

The Draize Test has been criticized on several grounds. Ophthalmologist Dr. Stephen Kaufman of



Photo 1: Animal Alliance (AAC)

the Medical Research Modernization Committee points out that a rabbit's eye has a thinner cornea and is more sensitive than a human eye.

Consequently, results of tests

conducted on rabbits' eyes cannot be legitimately extrapolated to humans.

Dr. Neal Barnard of the Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine has condemned the Draize for being highly subjective and inconsistent. Indeed, the inconsistency of the Draize was demonstrated by a Carnegie University of Pittsburgh study in which substances were distributed to twenty-four laboratories for testing. The laboratory results showed substantial variations in the methods different laboratories used to evaluate a rabbit's reactions. Furthermore, some laboratories reported unusually severe reactions to a substance, while other laboratories concluded that the same substance was non-irritating. If different scientists using the Draize cannot agree on the effects of a substance, how useful can the test be?

Alternatives to Irritancy Tests

There is an array of alternatives to animal-based skin and eye irritancy tests that are easily available. Alternatives to the skin irritancy tests include, the Epiderm™ System produced by Mattek (www.mattek.com) consists of normal, human-derived epidermal keratinocytes (NHEK) which have been cultured to form a multilayered, highly differentiated model of the human epidermis. The Human Skin Patch (HSP) Test uses human volunteers who have a full explanation of the test, complete a medical screening questionnaire and consent form. Products placed in "mini-saucers" of a test-strip, which are then applied to the skin in a sensitive area ie, forearm or just above the hip. The patches are applied for various periods of time ranging from 24-48 hours.

Toxicity Tests

The Lethal Dose Fifty Percent test (or LD-50), developed in 1927, is the classic method used to measure the acute toxicity of certain ingredients. The test is used to determine the dosage of a given substance that is required to kill 50% of the test animals within a specified time period. Animals are force fed, injected with or forced to inhale toxic substances such as body lotion or drain cleaner. As the dosage of the test substance increases, the animals' internal organs may become blocked or ruptured, causing symptoms such as convulsions, chronic diarrhea and massive bleeding. The animals eventually die as a result of the tests or are killed.

Problems With Toxicity Tests

Toxicity tests have been widely criticized as inhumane, inconsistent and irrelevant to humans. Results from specific tests indicate the amount of a given substance necessary to kill a skin cells to predict skin irritation; creating mathematical and computer models to predict the reaction of tissue cells and organs to chemical substances; and using computer programs to predict human reactions to substances. The US Food and Drug Administration and Environmental Protection Agency, as well as many corporations, use computer programs in place of animal testing. Furthermore, companies can use ingredients that are known to be safe, and they can perform literature searches which often eliminate testing by applying the results of previous experiments.

Alternatives to Toxicity Tests

There are several tests aimed at reducing the numbers of animals used in toxicity tests, and while the need to find a non-animal alternative to replace the LD50 test is viewed as a priority, the best that can be done is to reduce the numbers of animals used. The Basal Cytotoxicity Assay using normal human cells is suitable for use as a reduction measure.

The Political Climate

The Canadian government, under the *Food and Drugs Act*, stipulates that manufacturers must ensure the safety of all products. However, the



Photo 2: Skin Irritancy Test (PETA)

Food and Drugs Act does not require specific methods, nor do they require animal tests.

In addition, over 5,000 GRAS (generally recognized as safe) ingredients are federally recognized, as such, these ingredients do not require additional testing. Provincial governments, therefore, have the jurisdiction to regulate cosmetic and product testing. In Ontario, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) administers the *Animals for*

Research Act, which applies to all animals used in experimentation, including testing, education and research.

Legislation Around the World

In January 2003, the European Union successfully passed a ban on cosmetic animal testing and a ban on the sale of new animal tested cosmetics. Across Europe, England, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands have all banned the practice.

Guaranteed Cruelty-Free Products

While most “cruelty-free” claims on packaging are defined by the company, there is no assurance for compassionate consumers that the finished product or its ingredients were there was no animal tests.



Leaping Bunny Logo

Animal protection groups around the world developed the *Standard of Compassion for Animals*, the corresponding “Leaping

Bunny” Logo and website (www.leapingbunny.org).

Consumers purchasing products with this logo are guaranteed that there was:

No animal testing on final products,
No animal testing on the raw ingredients,
No animal testing contracted out to a third party.

What You Can Do

Contact the Prime Minister of Canada and the Minister of Health and ask for a ban on the use of animals for cosmetic and household product testing. Please send us copies of your correspondence for our files.

The Right Hon. Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2 (no postage required)

Phone: (613) 992-4211 Fax: (613) 941-6900
E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of Health
Brooke Claxton Bldg., Tunney’s Pasture
P.L 0906C
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9 (no postage required)

Phone: (613) 957-0200 Fax: (613) 952-1124

Other On-line Resources:

www.cruelscience.ca



www.animalalliance.ca



www.environmentvoters.org

E-mail: minister_ministre@hc-sc.gc.ca

1. Take advantage of your power as a consumer. Only buy products that have not been tested on animals. Many large corporations have stopped testing their products on animals, but just as many have refused to adopt humane testing methods. Contact Animal Alliance for our Compassionate Shopping Guide. The Guide lists cruelty-free companies that have permission to use to the "Leaping Bunny" Logo (www.leapingbunny.org) on their product label.

2. Write and thank companies that have stopped testing on animals. Also, contact companies which still conduct animal tests and ask them to stop using animals. Please send us copies of your correspondence.

3. Make your views known to all levels of government through letters, phone calls and

meetings, and write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.

4. Distribute copies of this and other information sheets from Animal Alliance.

5. Become a supporter and volunteer for Animal Alliance. By donating your time and money, you will help us to end animal abuse and cruelty.

Suggested Reading

Victims of Vanity, Lynda Dickinson, Toronto: Summerhill Press (1989).

Photo 1: Animal Alliance of Canada

Photo 2: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

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For More Information...

Contact Animal Alliance to receive information sheets on a variety of topics.

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