

# Association for the Abolition of Animal Experiments

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## *The myth of animal experimentation:* **Drug safety**

*In the United States, adverse drug reactions kill more than 100,000 patients every year, which corresponds to the fifth leading cause of death in the United States. That this is due to animal testing is never mentioned by the pharmaceutical industry, the regulatory authorities or the media.*

Concerning drug safety, *Interpharma, the Association of Researching Swiss Pharmaceutical Firms*, in Basle, Switzerland, writes: «At present, testing drugs without animals is unthinkable. Animal tests are essential for guaranteeing the efficacy and safety of drugs.» Is this true?

- According to the U.S. *Food and Drug Administration (FDA)*, a staggering 92% of all drugs found safe and therapeutically effective in animal tests fail during human clinical trials due to their toxicity and/or inefficacy, and are therefore not approved. Furthermore, over half of the mere 8% of drugs which do gain *FDA* approval must later be withdrawn or relabeled due to severe, unexpected side effects.

- According to the medical literature, more than 2 million hospital patients in the United States suffer severe adverse drug reactions every year. In addition, adverse drug reactions kill more than 100,000 patients every year, which corresponds to the fifth leading cause of death in the United States. In Switzerland, about 40,000 patients suffer severe adverse drug reactions every year, of whom 500-1000 die as a result. These numbers are too low, however, since many adverse drug reactions are not reported or even recognized as such. Furthermore, cases of death and disability caused by adverse drug reactions are not counted in any official statistic in the United States or Switzerland.

- As prescribed by law, all of these drugs were first **tested on animals** for their efficacy and safety. In humans, however, they caused severe suffering and death. This is hardly surprising: Due to fundamental differences between species and their metabolisms, animals react differently to drugs than humans. Furthermore, animal experiments are performed under artificial laboratory conditions which do not correspond to the complex characteristics of the human body.

- Animal experiments therefore allow no safe, reliable conclusions when extrapolated to humans and in reality serve merely as an **alibi**: In cases of death or disability caused by adverse drug reactions, the responsible pharmaceutical firms indicate that they performed the legally prescribed «safety tests» on animals and are therefore not accountable. This is why the victims or their families most often come away empty-handed after suing for damages.