

Association for the Abolition of Animal Experiments

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Man as a victim of animal experimentation:

Adverse drug reactions

In the European Union, approximately 200,000 patients die every year from adverse drug reactions, which corresponds to the fifth leading cause of death in the EU. Adverse drug reactions are also the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, where they account for more than 100,000 deaths every year.

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 Furthermore, over half of the mere 8% of drugs which do gain *FDA* approval must later be withdrawn or relabeled due to severe, unexpected side effects.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 *EU-Commission of the European Communities*, approximately 200,000 patients die in the European Union every year from adverse drug reactions, which corresponds to the fifth leading cause of death in the EU. According to the medical literature, adverse drug reactions are also the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, where they account for more than 100,000 deaths every year. These numbers are too low, however, since many adverse drug reactions are not reported or even recognized as such. Furthermore, deaths caused by adverse drug reactions are not counted in any official statistic in the EU or USA.

- 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.