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# Animals and Humans in Research

*When using living organisms in scientific investigations, it is important to treat them **humanely**, **responsibly** and **ethically**.*

## Using Live Animals in Investigations



The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee has developed rules and guidelines that help to ensure the ethical treatment of animals in research. Any experiment that requires the use of animal subjects must meet

these guidelines.

The ethical treatment of animals outlined by these guidelines includes providing food, water, and plenty of space to any animal that is being kept in the lab for a long period of time. The conditions that the animal is kept in should be as close to the animal's native habitat as possible, and all of the animal's basic needs should be met.

Animals should never be treated cruelly during an investigation. If an animal becomes ill while it is being kept in the lab, it should be taken to a veterinarian for care. If wild animals are being observed in the field, scientists should minimize any interactions they have with the animals. Observing from a distance is always best, and a scientist should never cause harm to the wild animals that they are observing.

A controversial issue arises when live animals are placed at risk during laboratory investigations. For example, some scientists that study human diseases will purposely infect mice (or other organisms) with the disease so that they can experiment with potential cures. There is a high degree of risk involved for the animals used in these kinds of investigations, but the investigation could result in a groundbreaking new treatment for a human disease and could eventually save thousands of lives. In these cases, an ethical decision must be made by the scientist about whether the importance of the results outweighs the risks that the animals experience.

## Human Subjects in Research

When an experiment involves human subjects, such as when a new drug is being tested, there are ethical rules that must be followed both before and after the investigation has begun.

Before an investigation using human subjects can begin, all potential subjects should be fully informed about the risks and benefits associated with the research and of their right to refuse to participate. Human subjects must also be informed about how their information will be shared with others as experimental results are recorded and published so that their privacy and confidentiality are not violated. All of these issues should be drawn up into a consent form that the patient reads and signs. Investigations should never be started without written consent forms from all subjects involved.



After the investigation begins, human subjects must be monitored closely to ensure their safety and comfort. If at any time during the investigation a subject is no longer comfortable and wishes to withdraw from the investigation, they must be allowed to do so. If anything changes during the investigation, or if new information is discovered, human subjects must be notified so that they can reevaluate the risks and benefits of their participation.

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