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Controversies and ethics of animal testing: Emerging issues and new challenges

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Animal testing was and is and will be an ongoing process as it leads to many scientific breakthroughs. Scientists strongly favour animal testing in spite of repeated protests from animal rights activists. Humans can decide whether to give consent or not which the animals cannot and hence tests are conducted on them. A major ethical issue with animal testing is that it mostly involves pain, suffering and discomfort. Experimenters wherever possible will use anaesthetics but for some types of testing, using a pain reliever can mean an interaction with the drug being tested. The animals therefore experience the effects of that drug and if it involves pain it presents an unpleasant situation. Best experimental designs to reduce the number of animals, proper anaesthesia to reduce pain, and Euthanasia if mandated have to be ensured in justifiable cases. Animal usage for cosmetics testing has to be banned as done in some countries. If it is to continue, animal suffering should be minimised / avoided. The pros and cons of each experiment have to be discussed with a holistic approach. A scientific basis should prevail upon those who resort to experimentation preventing irrational abuse which may lead to allegations. Animal testing is a necessary evil; it is indispensable and inevitable. It should be viewed in a broader perspective in the larger interest of a nation's progress. Laws and regulatory practices of the ethics committees should be strictly enforced. Non scientific socially aware member's opinion should be considered. Transparency should exist which would help reduce any controversies.

Biography

P V S Kishore completed his PhD from the Madras Veterinary College, Chennai, India. He is the Professor & Head in the Veterinary University, Andhra Pradesh, India. He is a CPCSEA nominee of the Ministry of Environments & Forests, Government of India to about 30 different organizations. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Veterinary Science and Indian Association of Veterinary Anatomists. He has published about 40 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as a referee for various journals and is also an editorial board member of repute.

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