**Using Animals for Testing: Pros Versus Cons**

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There are many pros and cons to the practice of animal testing. Unfortunately, neither seem to fully tip the scale to a side that pleases everyone – including the general public, government and scientists.

**Pros or Postives of Animal Testing**

**1. Helps researchers to find drugs and treatments:**
The major pro for animal testing is that it aids researchers in finding drugs and treatments to improve health and medicine. Many medical treatments have been made possible by animal testing, including cancer and HIV drugs, insulin, antibiotics, vaccines and many more.

**2. Improves human health:**
It is for this reason that animal testing is considered vital for improving human health and it is also why the scientific community and many members of the public support its use. In fact, there are also individuals who are against animal testing for cosmetics but still support animal testing for medicine and the development of new drugs for disease.

**3. Helps ensure safety of drugs:**
Another important aspect to note is that animal testing helps to ensure the safety of drugs and many other substances humans use or are exposed to regularly. Drugs in particular can carry significant dangers with their use but animal testing allows researchers to initially gauge the safety of drugs prior to commencing trials on humans. This means that human harm is reduced and human lives are saved – not simply from avoidance of the dangers of drugs but because the drugs themselves save lives as well as improve the quality of human life.

**4. Alternative methods of testing do not simulate humans in the same way**
Scientists typically use animals for testing purposes because they are considered similar to humans. As such, researchers do recognise the limitations and differences but the testing is done on animals because they are thought to be the closest match and best one with regards to applying this data to humans.

**Cons or Negatives of Animal Testing**

**1. Animals are killed or kept in captivity:**
In animal testing, countless animals are experimented on and then killed after their use. Others are injured and will still live the remainder of their lives in captivity.

**2. Some substances tested, may never be used for anything useful:**
The unfortunate aspect is that many of these animals received tests for substances that will never actually see approval or public consumption and use. It is this aspect of animal testing that many view as a major negative against the practice, as it seems that the animal died in vain because no direct benefit to humans occurred.

**3. It is very expensive:**
Another con on the issue of animal testing is the price. Animal testing generally costs an enormous amount of money, as the animals must be fed, housed, cared for and treated with drugs or a similar experimental substance. On top of that, animal testing may occur more than once and over the course of months, which means that additional costs are incurred. The price of animals themselves must also be factored into the equation. There are companies who breed animals specifically for testing and animals can be purchased through them.

**4. Animals and humans are never exactly the same:**
There is also the argument that the reaction of a drug in an animal's body is quite different from the reaction in a human. The main criticism here is that some believe animal testing is unreliable. Following on that criticism is the premise that because animals are in an unnatural environment, they will be under stress. Therefore, they won't react to the drugs in the same way compared to their potential reaction in a natural environment. This argument further weakens the validity of animal experimentation.

**Personal Choice**

While there are numerous pros and cons of animal testing, the ethical aspect overshadows both of them, which means that emotion may be the ultimate determining factor in whether a person believes the benefits of animal testing outweigh the problems associated with the practice.

For more information about the ethics of animal testing on this site, read the following features: