

Dear Dr. Stokes,

I was very disturbed to hear about how NIEHS is still using the inaccurate and backwards method of testing toxicity on animals. When performed on animals these tests are not only useless because the information gained is not relevant to humans, but cruel because the animals suffer horribly before dying. The in vitro cell culture tests should be adopted to entirely replace the animal tests immediately. The non-animal test methods have been considered for almost 20 years, and now it's time to put them in place. Also, NIEHS has recommended using the non-animal method to set the starting dose for further animal-poisoning tests. While this may reduce the number of animals killed in acute poisoning studies, it does not go far enough. Government agencies should use in vitro cell culture tests to completely replace the use of animals in lethal dose tests. At a minimum, all government agencies that currently require the acute animal-poisoning studies should immediately incorporate the in vitro cell culture method as a transitional ~~method~~^{means} of reducing the number of animals killed and should fully support the use of this method as an eventual replacement for lethal-dose poisoning studies.

Sincerely,

Mary Nicola Ruggiero

