



Little Heroes for Veterans- Ethical Use of Animals in VA Research

WHY ARE ANIMALS USED?

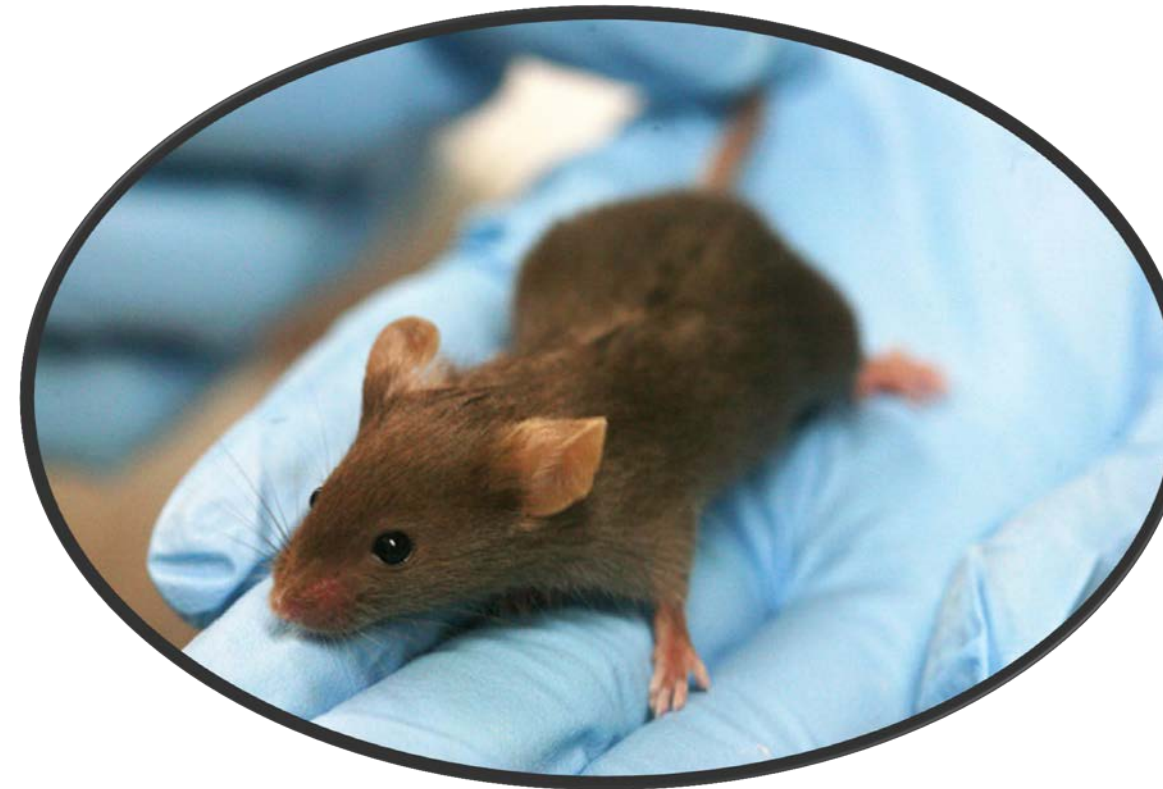
Animal Research has been and will be crucial for development of new drugs, medical devices, surgical techniques, and methods of preventing disease and suffering in veterans.

About half of all VA-funded research projects currently involve animals. **Animal research was important for all of the following discoveries:**

- Insulin use in diabetes
- Polio, meningitis, tetanus, whooping cough, measles, mumps, rubella vaccines
- Cardiac catheterization
- Heart pacemakers
- Cancer treatments
- Organ transplants
- Kidney dialysis
- Identification of all needed dietary vitamins
- Safe and effective anesthesia for surgery
- Blood typing for transfusions
- Treatments for depression
- **Almost every drug ever developed !**

WHO MAKES SURE RESEARCH ANIMALS ARE USED ETHICALLY?

Animal welfare is taken very seriously in VA programs. **A laboratory animal veterinarian, veterinary technicians, and specially trained animal technicians provide care for the animals, and every program has a committee called the IACUC (Institutional Animal care and Use Committee) that must carefully review and approve any research involving animals before it can begin.** All VA animal research programs must be accredited and follow many federal regulations and policies, including VA's own policies.



WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS?

ANIMAL SPECIES	% USED NATIONWIDE IN VA RESEARCH
mice	91.396%
rats	7.833%
voles	0.209%
rabbits	0.173%
hamsters	0.103%
frogs	0.066%
swine	0.060%
dogs	0.042%
fish	0.035%
guinea pigs	0.025%
primates	0.014%
cats	0.014%
chickens	0.009%
gerbils	0.008%
sheep	0.006%
chinchillas	0.003%
goats	0.003%
Cows	0.000%
(Total)	100%

The nationwide yearly use of animals in VA research programs is shown in the table at left. **Over 99% (more than 99 out of 100) of the animals used in VA research are mice or rats.**

