One reason medicines have so many side effects is that animal tests are the main form of screening before human trials. But we now know that animal tests cannot predict safety for humans. New tests can predict many side effects that animal testing fails to detect. But there is no legal requirement to use them!

Help us replace unreliable animal tests
Medicines are tested on patients and volunteers in clinical trials after they have been ‘shown to be safe’ in animals. Yet animal tests have never been shown to be fit for this purpose.

Analysis of thousands of studies on dogs, mice, rats, rabbits and monkeys shows that they have very little scientific value in predicting the safety of medicines for humans.¹

Nine out of ten drugs that appear safe and effective in animal tests prove unsafe or ineffective in human trials.

US Food and Drug Administration White Paper: Innovation or Stagnation, 2004

In India, hundreds of people die each year in trials for western medicines (2,644 between 2005-2012).²

Next-generation science

Modern science now offers advanced techniques using human tissue (with patients’ consent), sophisticated computer simulations, low-risk studies in volunteers, and 3D ‘organs-on-a-chip’, which can be interconnected as a model ‘human-on-a-chip’. Yet our government still insists on animal tests, while the US calls for their replacement by “more efficient in vitro tests and computational techniques” (US National Research Council, Toxicity Testing in the 21st Century, 2007).

The problem is not lack of science – it’s lack of political will

Scientists around the world agree that government regulators need to speed up their approval of superior new technologies to make medicines safer.

² A heaven for clinical trials, a hell for India, Andrew Buncombe, The Independent, 30 September 2013

As well as giving false assurances of safety, animal studies often mislead research and delay the development of medicines:

“The mouse has cost us a new generation of medicines... We keep getting led down the garden path... This isn’t just true for TB; it’s true for virtually every disease.”

Dr Clifton Barry, Chief of TB Research, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, USA

No other area of science still relies on the flawed methods of 50 years ago. We must move safety testing into the 21st century – for all our sakes.”

MPs strongly support our campaign.

Yet Government inaction is blocking the modernisation of safety testing that market forces would otherwise deliver.

A message from our Patrons

Dr James Le Fanu
Doctor and writer

Mat Fraser Actor
and thalidomider

Caroline Lucas MP
(Green Party Co-Leader)

Carol Royle
Actress

Paul Flynn MP
(Labour)

Sir David Amess MP
(Conservative)