



Be Cruelty-Free Australia



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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian Non-Animal Skin Test for Cosmetics Welcomed by #BeCrueltyFree Campaign

MELBOURNE (10 Oct. 2014) - Australian scientists from Melbourne-based [Baxter Laboratories](#) have developed an *in vitro* skin test that could work alongside other established alternative methods to help replace animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs in cruel and out-dated testing for cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. The test innovation has been welcomed by *#BeCrueltyFree Australia*, the leading campaign for an end to animal testing for cosmetics.

The new test, called the Immune Balance Rating system, is the result of a five year collaboration between Baxter Labs and fellow Melbourne researchers from the Monash University and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. It is hoped that the test will be used to assess the hypoallergenic response to both raw chemical ingredients and finished products once it has been validated and accepted for use by regulators.

Hannah Stuart, *#BeCrueltyFree Australia* campaigner, said: “This new non-animal test is a welcome development that could add to the toolbox of innovative *in vitro* tests now available to companies and regulators. Innovation in test development is already saving animals from several painful procedures in which their skin can swell and crack from chemicals, but sadly many companies, including those producing several popular cosmetics brands, have not fully turned their back on animal testing. As well as causing suffering, animal tests are scientifically questionable because rabbit or rodent skin can respond very differently to human skin when exposed to the same substance.”

“We hope that Baxter will submit the IBR test for formal validation in consultation with regulatory authorities so that it can be made available to companies wishing to test their products without using animals as soon as possible.”

In August, more than thirty cosmetics companies from across Australia joined with *#BeCrueltyFree* to write an open letter to Health Minister Peter Dutton urging him to support a national ban on animal testing for cosmetics and the sale of cosmetics animal-tested abroad. Aussie cruelty-free brands backing the [Be Cruelty-Free Australia](#) campaign include KORA Organics (the cruelty-free range by model

Miranda Kerr), as well as Australis, Natio, MooGoo, Lush Australia and The Body Shop.

Stuart says: “Non-animal test methods frequently offer companies cheaper, faster and more human-relevant data than the animal tests they replace. Globally, and here in Australia, there are hundreds of cosmetics companies selling products formulated using existing ingredients, without the need for any new animal testing.”

#BeCrueltyFree Australia is part of the largest campaign in the world to end cosmetics animal testing, and leads the campaign to ban animal-tested cosmetics in Australia. *#BeCrueltyFree Australia* is co-ordinated by Humane Research Australia and Humane Society International. Globally there are *#BeCrueltyFree* campaigns in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Russia, Taiwan and the United States.

Click [here](#) to sign a *#BeCrueltyFree* pledge in support of a ban on cosmetics cruelty in Australia and worldwide.

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