

MEDIA RELEASE

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Animal tests fail us yet again as 11 babies die

Disturbing [news](#) broke recently that yet another clinical trial – this time in in the Netherlands - has gone terribly wrong after animal tests failed to predict the dire outcomes.

Erectile dysfunction drug Viagra was given to Dutch women to determine whether it might help boost the growth of their unborn babies. Tragically, eleven of the babies died from a lack of oxygen. The idea of using Viagra had been **supported by animal research**. “The **success of the rat testing** led the Dutch hospitals, as well as other research groups in Canada.” [Emphasis added]

Helen Marston, CEO, Humane Research Australia: *“This is yet another clear example that animals tests are not predictive of human outcomes.”*

Drugs are regularly withdrawn from the market when the results differ from those expected from animal tests and prove instead to be dangerous in humans, however few receive much media coverage.

One example is from January 2016 when [a clinical trial in France](#) left one human volunteer dead and others at risk of permanent brain damage. The men were volunteers in a Phase 1 clinical trial of a new drug, [code named BIA 10-2474](#), to treat pain and anxiety.

Vioxx, Thalidomide and TGN1412 also attracted some media coverage, however a more extensive (but certainly not exhaustive) list can be found [here](#).

“Considering that 95% of drugs that enter clinical trials do not make it to the market, despite all promise of the (animal) models used to develop them¹ it is becoming increasingly clear that our methods of testing need to change, and instead of focusing on animals with different genetics and metabolism to us, we need to embrace the technologies that are specific to humans – not monkeys or mice – because it’s quite obvious that animal tests provide dangerously misleading data.” Ms Marston concluded.

Ends.

¹ Look Back in Anger – What Clinical Studies Tell Us About Preclinical Work Thomas Hartung, Altex 30, 3/13 (http://altweb.jhsph.edu/altex/30_3/FFTHartung.pdf)