



MEDIA RELEASE

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Outrage at ‘shaking lambs to death’ experiment conducted at Adelaide University

Humane Research Australia has condemned a recent experiment using live lambs to prove “shaken baby syndrome” as yet another example of the unethical, cruel & unnecessary research currently carried out at Australian universities & research facilities.

The research conducted at Adelaide University, and funded by the **National Health & Medical Research Council** aimed to prove that no head trauma other than shaking was needed to cause fatal head injuries and permanent brain damage in babies. The research went ahead despite the existence of previous studies, and the obvious common sense fact that if babies are shaken violently, injury or death can occur.

The researchers, including **world-renowned pathology professor Roger Byard** used nine anaesthetised lambs. They were grasped under the axilla (underarm; or under leg in the case of quadrupeds) and vigorously shaken with sufficient force to snap the head back and forth onto the chest. Each lamb was shaken in this manner 10 times of 30 seconds duration over a 30 minute period. During the experiment, three of the lambs (of a lesser body weight) died unexpectedly. The remaining lambs (of a higher body weight) were killed after six hours and left overnight. The next day, brains, spinal cord and both eyes were collected for examination.

Chief Executive Officer, Helen Marston said today *“A great amount of unnecessary research is being conducted on animals in Australia including silicone breast implants in pigs, feeding alcohol to pregnant sheep and giving marijuana and ecstasy to rats. Animal experimentation is not just about cruelty to animals; it’s about wasting precious resources which would be better spent on human-specific research relevant to medical progress”*

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