



2015 PSBR High School Essay Contest
Finalist

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Imagine a normal day: you wake up for school. You brush your teeth, you put on your clothes as you glance at the clock by your bedside table as habit. You go downstairs for breakfast, and you're about to rush out the door when your mom yells out for you to take your insulin pen—you know, just in case. Lucky your mom caught you there! Now you're covered for your diabetes. Now imagine that same day but you didn't have your insulin. What would happen? Not anything good. One of my close friends has diabetes and knowing that she is able to treat it and stay healthy leaves me with much gratitude. Thinking about theoretical situations like these can surely cause some apprehension, but on the other hand, it leaves time to truly appreciate how far biomedical research has come.

Using animals in biomedical science has truly helped advance our knowledge of diseases and the medicines and processes used to counteract fatal or detrimental illnesses. Diabetes was first questioned by Oskar Minkowski in 1889 who removed the pancreas of the dog, and that dog, in turn, started showing symptoms of diabetes, such as hunger and weight loss ("Animal Research: Finding Cures, Saving Lives"). A few years later, in 1921, Frederick Banting and Charles Best isolated insulin from the pancreas of a dog. Thus, this introduced insulin to the world, and in turn, saving lives of diabetic people. Using animals and experimenting allowed the advancement and evolution of medicine.

In addition, note all those lab mice you hear about. They are being tested in order to expand our knowledge about health and the human body and to be able to produce medicines and solutions for all the diseases known so far ("The Use of Animals in Biomedical Research: Improving Human and Animal Health"). Because their bodies and DNA are so similar to those of humans, it is possible to be able to find out more and to produce more solutions against preventable diseases and illnesses. It may be amongst some people's minds that animal research is not humane or that it is cruel and harmful and causes more evil than good, but may those people be enlightened as it is worth noting that many scientists are making sure that research animals are in safe environments. Additionally, the Animal Welfare Act ensures that lab animals are cared for before, during, and after testing ("Facts About Animal Research."). Besides, what is better than safe and healthy animals *and* new medicines and useful research?

In conclusion, it is truly notable about how our biomedical research as evolved from the start of human time. From the discovery of insulin to vaccinations for polio to transplants of organs, so many lives have been saved, all thanks to our biomedical research scientists and, most importantly, our animals.

Bibliography

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