Bf3R – German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals

The BfR performs the role of the “German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R)” and coordinates all associated activities nationwide with the goal of:

- Reducing animal experiments to the necessary minimum
- Providing the best possible protection for laboratory animals.

Furthermore, national and international research activities and a scientific dialogue shall be encouraged by the work of the Centre.

Bf3R Seminars

The Bf3R seminars address issues related to the use of animal experiments and alternative methods in basic research and toxicology, as well as the 3Rs. They include a lecture of approx. 30–60 min, followed by a discussion.

Venue I, 17. April 2018, Prof. Macleod

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment
Diedersdorfer Weg 1
12277 Berlin

Building 3, Room D-146

Directions: https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/marienfelde.html

Venue II, 12. November 2018, Prof. Jordan

Kaiserin Friedrich-Haus
Robert-Koch-Platz 7
10115 Berlin

Directions: http://www.kaiserin-friedrich-stiftung.de/anfahrt.html


Registration

Please register online:
Venue I, until 13.04.2018 via www.bfr-akademie.de/english/events/bf3r-seminar-1.html
Venue II, until 07.11.2018 via www.bfr-akademie.de/english/events/bf3r-seminar-2.html

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Improving the ethical position of animal research by increasing benefit: Rationale for and features of a research improvement strategy

All research has costs and potential benefits. In research involving animals the costs include the ethical burden of causing harms to animals for the purposes of human benefit. There is general (but not universal) consensus that this ethical burden is acceptable to society, if it is as small as possible and if the prospects for human benefit are sufficiently large. Much attention has been paid to the minimisation of the ethical burden through refinement, reduction and replacement; but until recently there has been less focus on opportunities to improve the ethical balance by increasing benefit.

We and others have shown that the majority of reports of animal research do not tell the research user whether the study was randomised or blinded, reported a sample size calculation, was guided by an a priori study protocol, was selective in the reporting of outcomes measured, used their first choice of statistical test, reported data for all animals included in the study and even whether the hypothesis presented was the one they started with, or evolved in the light of the data presented in the paper in support of that “improved” hypothesis. We have shown that studies at such risks of bias are associated with larger effect sizes, and that there is a substantial publication bias in most animal literatures. We have shown that journal-based improvement activity has only minor impact unless substantial resources are devoted to this.

Taking a lead from health care improvement activity, we are developing tools to allow the quality of reporting of animal research to be evaluated in real time across a range of stakeholder domains including by institution, funder, regulator, journal or nation. This measurement will provide data for research improvement activity, where for instance an institution might measure performance, implement strategies intended to improve performance, and then measure what impact has been made. Such information will allow much better targeting of, and greater efficiency in, research improvement activities. And by improving the credibility and validity of research findings, the ethical balance between harms and benefits will be shifted towards benefit. I will sketch out the rudiments of an institutional research improvement strategy.

The Discovery and Science of Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators (SERMs) as Multipurpose Medicines

Tamoxifen is the first SERM. Millions of women continue to benefit from long-term adjuvant tamoxifen treatment for breast cancer. Ideally, a SERM will be antiestrogenic to prevent cancers in the breast and uterus. Additionally, a SERM will be estrogenic to build bone, and reduce circulating cholesterol, to protect post-menopausal women from atherosclerosis and coronary heart disease. Osteoporosis and coronary heart disease are the two major death causes of elderly women. With our aging population, SERMs have become increasingly important as medicines in public health. New SERMs were needed to refine safety issues with tamoxifen. There are five SERMs approved by the food and drug administration. Raloxifene, basedoxifene, toremifene, and ospemifene all have discovery or chemical research links back to Jordan’s Tamoxifen Team laboratory. Mechanisms of action will be considered and issues of the development of anticancer drug resistance addressed.