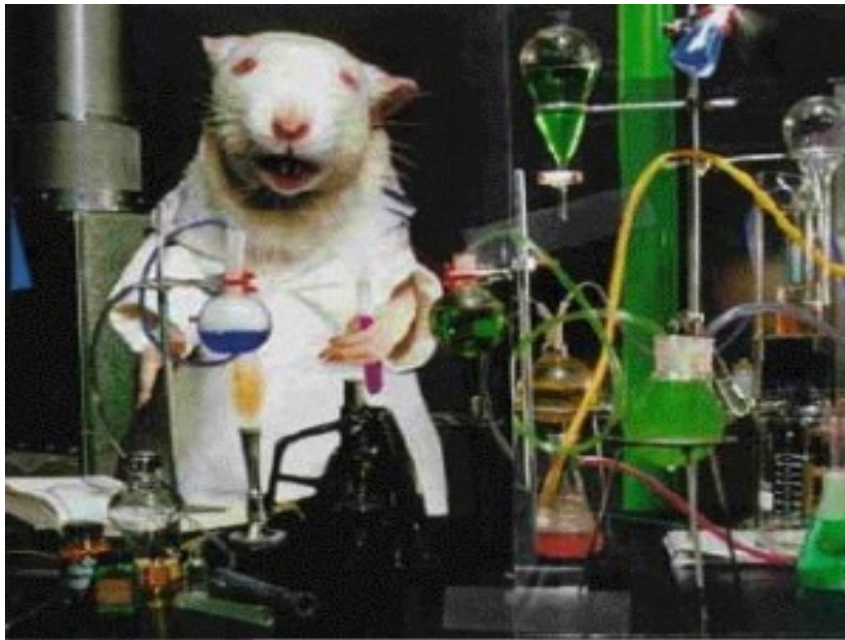


PETA, Rejoice: The Cosmetics Industry Has a Replacement for Animal Testing

BY [ARIEL SCHWARTZ](#) Thu Jan 21, 2010



Mice and guinea pigs have long been subject to the wrath of cosmetics companies that use animals for skin allergy testing. But the thousands of critters experimented on each year won't be needed for much longer now that L'Oreal and the Hurel Corporation have developed a chip that can mimic the interaction between skin and the lymphatic system.

The futuristic chip, which simulates a local lymph node assay test, contains an artificial lymph node connected by a chemical gradient to an artificial skin construct made out of cultured human dendritic cells. Using the chip is simple: Just put the chemical product being tested in contact with the artificial skin construct. An allergic reaction is simulated by dendritic cells moving towards the artificial lymph node and stimulating T cells.

Since the chip simulates a human allergic reaction, it is more accurate than animal testing. There are still a number of kinks to work out, however. The biggest problem is figuring out how to determine the severity of a reaction--something that is difficult to measure on a chip. Hurel still expects a working prototype to be ready by 2011, and a marketable product is anticipated by 2013--just in time for Europe's ban on animal testing in cosmetics to go into effect. Isn't it amazing what a little government prodding can do?

[Via [MIT Technology Review](#)]