

January 31, 2018

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TOP STORY

Monkey study may explain Zika birth defect link

(Mario Tama/Getty Images)

The Zika virus causes thickening and inflammation of placental tissue, slowing oxygen transfer to the developing fetus, and those changes may explain fetal abnormalities such as microcephaly, researchers reported in Nature Communications. The study, involving rhesus monkeys, also showed that Zika can be transmitted from the mother monkey to the baby, where it can cause chronic infection.

[HealthDay News](#) (1/26)



RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS

Experimental vaccine for heroin addiction shows promise in nonhuman primates

(John Moore/Getty Images)

Kim Janda, a chemist at Scripps Research Institute, is working on a vaccine for heroin addiction that has shown efficacy in rodents and nonhuman primates. The agent works by training the immune system to mount a response to heroin and block the high, and it might reduce the lethality of an overdose, Janda says, offering another tool to fight a spike in opioid abuse mortality.

[Houston Chronicle](#) ([tiered subscription model](#)) (1/25)



Exposure to nicotine in e-cigarettes damages DNA in rodents, cell cultures

Nicotine in electronic cigarettes damages DNA as well as its ability to repair itself, raising the risk of cancer, according to a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The effect was seen in mice and in cultured human lung and bladder cells exposed to nicotine from e-cigarettes alone and combined with a solvent in

e-cigarettes.

[HealthDay News](#) (1/29)



Mouse study brings researchers closer to precision treatment of depression

Researchers reported in PLOS Biology that they identified genes common to mice and humans that predict response to antidepressants with 76% accuracy. A different study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry found a specific genetic variant that can predict escitalopram remission, response and changes in the severity of depression symptoms.

[University of Miami Miller School of Medicine/News release](#) (1/30)



Other News

- **Scientists create biomechanical map of mouse's heart** [Health Imaging online](#) (1/25)

ANIMAL HEALTH

How to get an overweight cat slim and trim

More than half the domestic cats in the US are obese or overweight and at risk for diabetes, skeletal stress and short life expectancy, but a new diet described in the American Journal of Veterinary Research can get a fat cat back in shape. Researchers fed cats a moderate-protein, high-fiber diet and reduced meal size in phases, gradually reducing cats' body fat while maintaining lean muscle mass and activity levels, says animal and nutritional science professor Kelly Swanson.

[LiveScience](#) (1/25)



Other News

- **Gates Foundation, UK government invest \$174M in livestock, crop health** [Reuters](#) (1/26)

POLICY NEWS

Interagency committee issues framework for alternatives to animal testing

A framework developed by 16 federal agencies and published by the National Toxicology Program lays out a path toward minimizing the use of animals in toxicology testing of chemicals and medicines. The Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods developed the framework and encourages federal agencies and regulated industries to adopt validated alternatives to animal testing, such as high-throughput screening, tissue chips and computational models.

[National Institutes of Health/News release](#) (1/30)



FDA ends nicotine study

The FDA said a nicotine addiction study involving squirrel monkeys did not meet animal-welfare standards and ended it. FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said the agency wants to reduce the need to use animals in biomedical tests, but some research depends on studies involving nonhuman primates, such as those involving the development of vaccines for children.

[The Washington Post \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (1/26)



ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVITY

Animal rights advocates accused of sexual harassment

Seven current and former employees of the Humane Society of the United States say that former employee and activist Paul Shapiro sexually harassed them and led at least five employees to resign since 2015. An internal investigation revealed sexual harassment allegations against CEO Wayne Pacelle dating to 2005.

[Politico](#) (1/30), [The Washington Post \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (1/29)



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Andrew Clements,

writer



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