



THE TURKISH JOURNAL OF GASTROENTEROLOGY

From the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

It is my pleasure to let you know that there is a significant rise in access to our articles through Pubmed from 2014 to 2015 indicating that the up-trend in impact factor, which rose 60% in 2014, will go on.

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Our last issue focusing on non-animal experimental methods attracted attention and I am very happy to receive the following letter from a medical student who was touched by our anti-animal experiment stance. Now, we are working together to found an organization entitled "Medical Students against Animal Experiments".

Hakan Şentürk
Editor in Chief

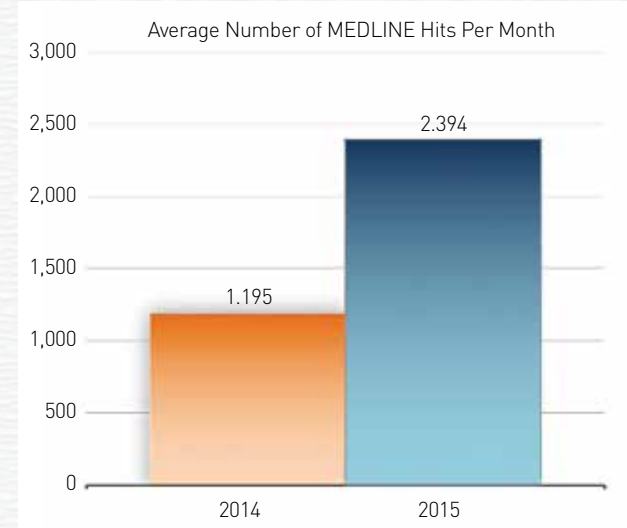
A MEDICAL STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION

When I started medical school I had the same dream as everyone else: to become a good physician. Our professors have always encouraged us to do scientific research, but there was one obstacle that I always came across: animal use in experiments. In my mind, animals are sentient beings and I could never distinguish and favor a cat over a cow or a dog over a rat. I love taking care of animals, and I didn't think I can use them for experiments.



This dilemma never left me, and as a result I was a medical student on her 4th grade who already gave up on medical research.

Fortunately shortly after, I saw our professor Hakan Şentürk's article on this very journal about "Moving Beyond Animal Models" (1). It got me thinking. Despite what many other professors think, it is actually possible to be a good researcher and a



physician without using animals for experiments. Never had I read so many rational reasons to not use animals for research.

We are quite excited and proud to announce that we are starting a student organization called Medical Students Against Animal Experiments at the Bezmialem Vakıf University. We are against animal abuse and believe that science can be done without harming non-human animals. Such an association is a necessity because animal testing has proved itself to be not only cruel but also expensive and inapplicable to humans. Together, we can work on new ideas and alternatives on animal testing both locally and globally.

We are starting a student organization called Medical Students Against Animal Experiments

For the past few decades science has evolved tremendously and there is now plenty of room for different ideas. Looking through various of research articles, there are many non-animal research methods such as in vitro models (2), organs-on-chips (3), computer models that simulate



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human biology [4] and many more. For example, virtually every medical school in the United States and Canada no longer uses animals for training medical students, instead using virtual reality and other simulation methods [5]. Why won't yours be one of those?

There is a need for motivated members in the society to advocate against animal use for experiments. I am sure that we will expand in no time with the participation of hardworking and responsible medical students in this association. Science deserves a conscientious modality. It is time.

Aila Gareayaghi
Medical Student

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