Why Animal Studies Still Matter in the Fight *Against Diabetes*

A century ago, a diagnosis of type 1 diabetes was an often untreatable, deadly disease. Today it is a manageable, everyday condition — and much of that progress is due to research that includes animal studies and rigorous scientific standards. From the discovery of insulin to the transplant procedures and medicines used today, animal research has repeatedly given scientists the proof they needed before a new treatment could reach patients.

See the breakthroughs patients depend on today — and the science still protecting them.



The Discovery of Insulin

In 1921, researchers conducted pancreatic experiments in dogs that revealed a substance capable of lowering blood sugar almost immediately. That discovery, later confirmed in cattle, became the foundation for insulin therapy, one of the most significant medical breakthroughs of the twentieth century.



Metformin's Long Road to the Clinic

Decades before it became the most widely prescribed diabetes medicine in the world, metformin was studied in rabbits and dogs, where researchers found it lowered blood glucose with little toxicity. That early animal data sat mostly unused for years until researchers revisited it and brought the drug to diabetic patients.



Islet Cell Transplantation

It was animal studies that proved curing diabetes with a simple injection of insulin-producing cells was possible long before doctors attempted it in people. Refinements first tested in animals, including newer approaches that avoid long-term immune-suppressing drugs, continue to shape this treatment today.



Understanding the Disease Itself

Before treatment could improve, scientists needed to understand why the pancreas stops working. Animal models of diabetes have allowed researchers to study its underlying biology in ways that would not have been possible or safe to study directly in people.



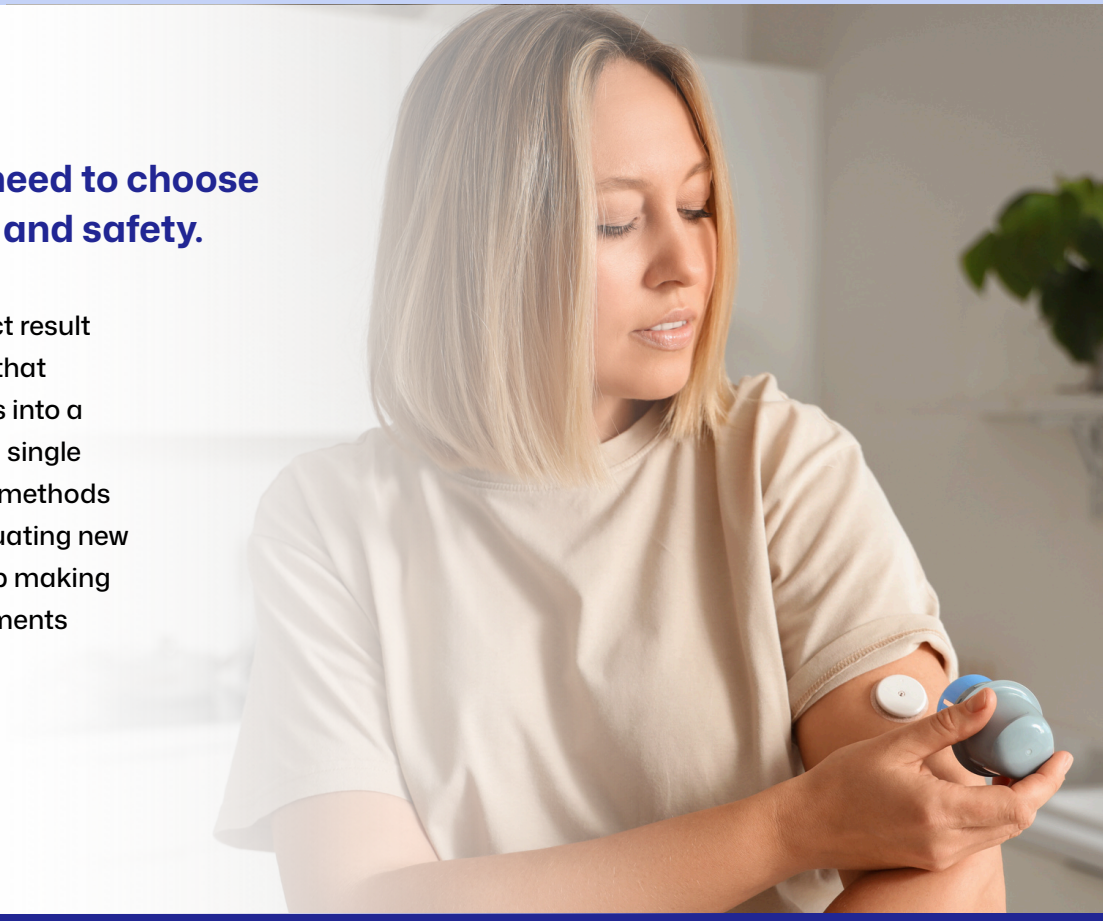
Continuing the Search for Better Options

Diabetes research has not stopped at insulin. Ongoing animal studies continue to test new delivery devices, transplant techniques, and medicines aimed at better blood sugar control and, eventually, a cure.



“Animal research is invaluable for tackling some of the most confounding human diseases, including neurodegenerative conditions, cancer, metabolic disorders, cardiovascular disease, and emerging infections.”

Harvard Medical School



Congress does not need to choose between innovation and safety.

Diabetes treatment is a direct result of proven research methods that transformed a fatal diagnosis into a manageable disease within a single generation. Protecting those methods today, while responsibly evaluating new tools, is how researchers keep making progress toward better treatments and a cure.

Protect the proven research methods that turned diabetes from a death sentence into a manageable disease.

Cure Coalition

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