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The use of animals in laboratory experiments is a controversial topic. Many people are opposed to experiments using living animals. These people feel that the suffering of lab animals is a moral issue similar to slavery in history. Controversy exists, however, there are also many people who feel that animal experiments are necessary for the prolonging of human life. On this basis, many doctors and scientists are in favor of maintaining animal experimentation.

A "medical laboratory animal" is defined as any vertebrate animal used in medical research, teaching or testing. Investigators, technicians and students who perform experiments on animals must be qualified through training and experience to accomplish these tasks in a scientifically justified and humane manner.

The purpose of this book is to provide a guide for students, research scientists, practicing veterinarians and veterinary technicians and others interested in learning about laboratory animal science. This book includes introduction of laboratory animal science; basic information on unique anatomic and physiologic characteristics; care and maintenance; research use for rodents, rabbits, cats, dogs, pigs, nonhuman primates and amphibians. For training purposes, medical research methodology is included. An example of animal use protocol, normal values of animals, questions for animal research as well as useful Web sites for laboratory animal science are attached in the Appendix.

Authors cannot be held responsible for misuse or misapplication of the material in this book. Any suggestions or comments about this book are appreciated and should be addressed to zhaojinshun@nbu.edu.cn.

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