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The safety of using enrichment materials in breeding cages

Environmental enrichment, as a part of normal husbandry procedures, is intended to improve the welfare of laboratory animals, including mice, by allowing them to engage in natural behaviors. While enrichment materials may be beneficial to adult mice, they may present a danger to newborn pups. Shair and colleagues directly examine the effects of three kinds of cage enrichment materials on C57BL/6 mouse offspring survival and growth. The authors report that all three types of enrichment materials are safe for use in breeding cages and that some materials are in fact beneficial to the quality of nests provided to offspring.

A proposed rabbit model of osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is a slowly progressing degenerative joint disease that is a leading cause of chronic disability in the US. Animal models of osteoarthritis are necessary for translational research to investigate the efficacy of potential treatments. Current animal models of osteoarthritis lack the spontaneous occurrence of the disease. Arzi *et al.* conducted a retrospective study to assess the potential of naturally occurring osteoarthritis in the domestic rabbit as a model for the human disease. The authors report that the rabbit provides an excellent model of spontaneously arising osteoarthritis and discuss the benefits of using this model.