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Prevalence of diseases in laboratory rats and mice from Australasia

Rats and mice used in biomedical research continue to contract infections despite improved housing and health monitoring practices. Disease in laboratory animals can affect results for research conducted with the animals. Elizabeth F. McInnes and her colleagues carried out serological, microbiological, parasitological and molecular tests on mice and rats submitted to a rodent health monitoring laboratory by institutions in Australasia from 2004 to 2009. Here they report the most prevalent viruses, bacterial infections and parasites among these rodents and compare their results from Australasia with prevalence data from other regions.

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Optimizing mutagenesis in zebrafish

Studying mutations in research animals such as zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) is useful for refining our understanding of a gene's function. Mutations can be generated for research purposes using a variety of techniques, including the mutagen N-ethyl-N-nitrosourea (ENU). One must balance several factors in order to perform safe and successful mutagenesis of zebrafish using ENU. Important considerations include the mortality of the fish, the safety of the researchers, the amount of labor and number of tanks required and the process of finding and isolating new mutants. In this article, Bill Trevarrow describes useful techniques for optimizing zebrafish mutagenesis using ENU.

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