

**Sandeep Vijan, M.D. F.A.C.S.**  
General/Gastrointestinal/Oncologic Surgery

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August 18, 2017

Michael K. Young  
President  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX 77843-4458

Via email: [PresidentYoung@tamu.edu](mailto:PresidentYoung@tamu.edu); [kimberly@tamu.edu](mailto:kimberly@tamu.edu); [khoule@tamu.edu](mailto:khoule@tamu.edu)

Dear President Young,

I am writing to you as a practicing surgeon and as a patient with muscular dystrophy to request your kind intervention in a troubling matter that recently came to my attention. I was appalled to learn that a member of your faculty, Prof. Joe Kornegay, uses selective breeding and artificial insemination to create colonies of dogs to have crippling muscular dystrophy. Prof. Kornegay then uses these dogs in experiments, extending and contracting their muscles to measure the damage done to the dogs' muscles. He has been carrying out this work for 35 years, but his experiments have not produced results that help humans suffering from muscular dystrophy. Still Texas A&M is allowing this practice to continue. I am writing to ask that you please intervene on behalf of these animals and the people who live with this disease to end this experimentation and instead focus Texas A&M's resources on sophisticated human-relevant methods for studying the disease.

As a surgeon, I am well aware of the differing physiologies of humans and dogs that make dogs poor surrogates for human disease. Duchenne muscular dystrophy manifests itself differently in dogs than it does in humans. Both neonatal death and growth retardation in humans with the disease is rare, whereas 20-30 percent of puppies bred for this research die and the ones who survive are 40 percent smaller than their peers by 6 months of age. Dogs, who are quadrupeds, do not lose their ability to walk, as biped humans do.

As an individual with muscular dystrophy, I would rather continue to suffer than have someone abuse dogs in their failing search for a cure. From the eyewitness video released by PETA, it is obvious that the dogs in this laboratory are not provided with the comfort and care that sick dogs deserve. Witnessing these dogs in their barren metal kennels, struggling just to live, is heartbreaking. I appeal to you as president of Texas A&M to end this suffering now.

Sincerely,

Sandeep Vijan, M.D. F.A.C.S.  
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