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Letters: Animal testing alternative

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First it was the [Swachh Bharat](#) campaign for a clean and hygienic India, then there was the public clamour for ensuring *swachh udar* (clean stomach) following the revelations of health hazards emanating from processed food. Now there seems to be a *swachh antaratma* (clean conscience) initiative from the government attempting to stop animal testing.

Efforts to substitute the despicable practice of animal testing are not new in India. Bharatnatyam dancer and animal rights activist, the late Rukmini Devi Arundale, as a private member of the [Rajya Sabha](#) introduced a Bill in 1952 for the prevention of cruelty to animals. To her credit, the Bill was enacted in 1960. In 2012, after being prevailed upon by PETA, the Ministry of Environment and Forests issued guidelines to the [University Grants Commission](#) (UGC) to replace dissection and experimentation on animals for training purposes in undergraduate and postgraduate courses with computer-aided learning and simulators. In 2014, the UGC, on the intervention of [PETA](#) and Maneka Gandhi, ensured full compliance with the guidelines. PETA is now offering a free virtual frog dissection software to schools and colleges.

On the subject of pharmaceutical testing on animals, a more vicious practice, I would like to draw the attention of companies to an innovative alternative called [CytoSolve](#) devised by V Shiva Ayyadurai, a US-based scientist of Indian origin. CytoSolve is an in-silico (computer-based) drug discovery tool that can

simulate diseases such as cancer, diabetes, fibrosis, inflammation etc on a computer. It can model even complex cellular functions of the human body, obviating the need for animal testing. Ayyadurai has drawn inspiration for his computational tool from Siddha, the holistic Indian system of medicine.



C V Krishna Manoj Hyderabad

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