

### 'We Are All Animals' - what does this statement mean?

Take a moment to think about this - humans are animals too! Like all living creatures, we have bodies that are made up of tiny building blocks called cells, which work together to keep us alive. We share many important similarities with other animals, such as:

- Hearts that pump blood around the body.
- Lungs to breathe in oxygen.
- A skeleton and muscles to help us move.
- We all have senses.
- The ability to feel pain, fear, happiness, and comfort.

This means that when animals and humans become sick, their illnesses are often the same as well. For example, dogs and humans can both get arthritis or heart disease. Cats and people can both develop diabetes. These are just a few examples from many.

### What is One Medicine?

One Medicine is the idea that humans and animals are connected, and knowledge of the health of one species can help the others. Scientists often study animals to learn about illnesses and create treatments for humans. However, there is something important we need to think about: the knowledge and treatments we discover don't always then get shared to help animals in return. Did you know that vets keep records on animals all of their lives, there is all this information that could be studied rather than doing experiments on animals. These are called naturally occurring diseases, which means they are more similar to how it occurs in humans too.

One Medicine asks us to think about reciprocity, which means sharing the information both ways, for humans and other animals. If humans learn from animals, then shouldn't animals also benefit from the medicines and treatments we discover?

Here are some real-life examples of One Medicine in action:

**Dogs and Heart Health:** Did you know that heart disease in dogs is almost as common as it is in humans, with approximately 10-15% of all dogs affected by heart disease? Scientists have learned about heart problems in humans by studying it in dogs, because humans and dogs suffer from many similar heart conditions. This research helps doctors make medicines that are also suitable for all animals.

**Cats and Cancer Treatment:** Cats are one species - of many - that can sometimes get the same kinds of cancer as humans. By studying cancer in cats, scientists have found better ways to treat cancer in people and other animals alike.



### We are all connected

It's easy to see how similar humans and animals really are when you look closely:

- Cells and Organs: A dog's heart beats just like a human's. A cat's lungs breathe in and out the same way ours do.
- Bones and Joints: A horse's knee is very similar to a human's elbow.
- Sleep: We all need sleep.
- Feelings and Needs: Animals feel happy, sad, scared, or calm, just like we do. If you've ever had a pet, you've probably seen this yourself!

Because we share so much, it's important to remember that animals need equal care and healthcare too. When scientists or vets learn something new, they should think about how to use that knowledge to help animals, not just humans.

### Get involved - share your ideas

For the 'We Are All Animals' Creative Awards, we want to hear what YOU think! Use your creativity to explore the ways humans and animals are alike, and imagine how One Medicine could work for both.

Here are some ideas to get started:

- Draw It: Create a picture of a human and an animal side by side. Can you show how their bodies are alike? Maybe you show that they both have hearts, lungs, or strong muscles!
- Write It: Imagine a vet and a doctor working together to solve a health problem. What would they do to make sure the animal gets the same care as the human?
- Think It Through: Why do you think animals don't always get the same treatments as humans? How could we change this in the future?

### Big questions to explore

- How are humans and animals similar?
- Why do you think humans sometimes forget to share treatments with animals?
- What could we do to make sure animals benefit from new medicines and discoveries?

Remember: One Medicine is about working together and sharing what we learn, because we are all animals, and every life matters. What will your ideas show the world?