

### What does it mean when we say 'We Are All Animals'?

Take a moment to think about this - humans are animals too! Like all living organisms, our bodies are made up of microscopic building blocks called cells, which perform countless tasks to keep us alive. But what makes humans and animals so similar? Here are just a few examples:

- Hearts pump blood around the body in humans and animals alike.
- Lungs help us all breathe in oxygen and release carbon dioxide.
- Skeletons and muscles provide structure and allow movement.
- Cells are the building blocks we are all made up of.
- We all share the ability to feel pain, fear, happiness, and comfort.

These similarities go beyond simply physical structures. Humans and animals can experience the same illnesses, like arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease. For example, did you know that humans and dogs can both suffer from epilepsy, or that cancer affects cats, dogs and people?

### What is One Medicine?

One Medicine is the concept that the health of humans and animals is deeply interconnected because of our similarities. When scientists and researchers study animal health, they often make discoveries that improve medicine for humans. For example, the study of heart disease in dogs has led to better treatments for people with similar conditions.

However, there's an important issue to consider - these advancements don't always benefit animals in return. Vets collect a lifetime of health data on the animals they treat, data that could be studied instead of experimenting on animals in laboratories. This approach uses naturally occurring diseases, diseases that the animal suffers from anyway, which are often more similar to how illnesses develop in humans. At the core of One Medicine is the principle of reciprocity - the idea that if humans learn from animals, and animals should benefit equally. If a breakthrough treatment or vaccine is developed, it should be shared across species to ensure both humans and animals receive the best care possible.

### Here is an amazing example of just one of our similarities!

In August 2020, The Lancet Oncology reported a case of bone cancer. The leg bone in question was about 76 million years old, according to an article in Science magazine. It belonged to a Centrosaurus, a horned, plant-eating dinosaur, and was found in Dinosaur Park in Alberta, Canada. The dinosaur had an osteosarcoma, the same type of tumour that develops in human teens and young adults and other mammals. The bone even looked like a teenage human calf bone infected with the same cancer. This is how long we have had the same health issues as animals! Isn't this amazing?



### We are all connected

When we look closely, the connections between humans and animals are astonishing:

- **Cells, Organs, and Systems:** A dog's heart beats and pumps blood in the same way a human heart does. A cat's lungs inhale and exhale just like ours. We have red blood cells, as do all mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish.
- **Bones and Joints:** A horse's knee joint is remarkably similar to a human's elbow. We have many similar bones to a dog, what is different is the length of these bones.
- **Emotions and Experiences:** Like humans, animals feel joy, fear, sadness, and comfort. If you've ever shared your life with an animal, you've probably noticed how they express these emotions in ways we can all relate to.

We share so much, it's essential to remember that animals deserve the same level of care and respect as humans. The knowledge gained through scientific research and medicine should be used to improve the lives of all species, not just our own.

### Your turn - be creative and inspire change

The 'We Are All Animals' Creative Awards 2025 are your opportunity to explore these fascinating connections and imagine what One Medicine could look like in the future. We want you to think critically, creatively, and compassionately about the physical and emotional similarities between humans and animals.

Here are some ideas to get started:

- **Art Challenge:** Draw or paint a detailed comparison of human and animal anatomy eg. a side-by-side look at a dog's heart and a human heart. How are they alike?
- **Story Challenge:** Write a short story about a vet and a doctor working together to solve a health challenge that impacts both humans and animals. How do they collaborate to ensure both species benefit?
- **Big Ideas Challenge:** Think about why animals often don't receive the same medical advancements as humans. What changes would you make to ensure animals are included in the benefits of new discoveries?

### Questions to explore

- How are the structures and functions of human and animal bodies alike?
- Why do you think animals are sometimes overlooked when it comes to medical advancements?
- What actions could scientists, doctors, and vets take to ensure animals benefit equally from breakthroughs in medicine?

At Humanimal Trust, we believe in the power of connection. By working together and sharing knowledge, we can build a future where humans and animals thrive side by side - because, after all, 'We Are All Animals'.

How can you make a difference?