

**IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE HUMAN INTERACTION AND DESENSITIZATION FOR CYNOMOLGUS
MACAQUES (*MACACA FASCICULARIS*) DURING IMPORT QUARANTINE PERIOD**

Sara L. Hastings and Dawn M. Abney

Charles River Laboratories, 6995 Longley Lane, Reno, NV, 89511, USA

Abstract

At the Charles River Laboratories facility in Nevada, positive Human Interaction (HI) occurs at least two times per week. Technicians are required to offer the animals a food treat from their hand. If the animal takes the treat, then it is offered another one as a reward. If the treat is not taken, then it is placed in the feed box. It has been suggested that offering the animals HI establishes trust between the staff and animals, creates a positive relationship, and helps to reduce stress. For this study, subjects were chosen from two separate shipments (Group 1 and Group 2) and each group consisted of 17 males and 17 females. Animals came from breeding facilities in China and were in a Center for Disease Control-required imported quarantine period for approximately 4 weeks and housed individually. During the quarantine period, Group 1 was desensitized to certain study stimuli 3 times a week. The animals received HI on the days when they were not being desensitized. During week one, 6% of Group 1 animals accepted HI, versus 3% of Group 2 animals. By week four, 21% of Group 1 animals accepted HI compared with 3% of Group 2 [Mann Whitney U Test: $p < 0.005$]. These data show that training has a large impact on the treat acceptance rate between the two groups.