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>LONDON (Reuter) - Most British doctors think animal-to-human transplants should be allowed, a survey published Wednesday found. Most also believe it is all right to genetically alter animals for the sake of medical science, the survey of 250 doctors for the British Medical Association's (BMA) News Review. And despite fears, even among experts, about the ethics of using apes and monkeys for transplant research, the doctors surveyed thought it should be allowed.

The British government has declared a moratorium on all animal-to-human transplants, known as xenotransplants, until the dangers and ethics have been examined. Last year the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, a panel made up of scientists, lawyers and ethicists, said xenotransplants would probably be all right if health and animal welfare issues were watched out for. There are fears that animal viruses could pass to humans, becoming deadly or virulent or both.

The BMA's survey found that 77 percent of its regular panel of 150 hospital doctors believed xenotransplants should be allowed. Sixty-five percent approved of genetically altering animals for science and 60 percent thought it all right to experiment on primates. Among general practitioners the figures were slightly lower -- 75 percent in favor of xenotransplants, 55 percent for genetic engineering and 56 percent for primate xenotransplants.

``So long as man uses animals for food, I see no moral distinction from the use of non-humans for medical purposes," anaesthetist Peter Bamber told the magazine.