Elon Musk says no monkeys died after Neuralink implant tests — but new information suggests a dozen monkeys were euthanized

Fresh allegations of potential securities fraud have been leveled at Elon Musk over statements he recently made regarding the deaths of primates used for research at Neuralink, his biotech startup.

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Musk first acknowledged the deaths of the macaques on September 10 in a reply to a user on his social networking app X (formerly Twitter). He denied that any of the deaths were “a result of a Neuralink implant” and said the researchers had taken care to select subjects who were already “close to death.” Relatedly, in a presentation last fall Musk claimed that Neuralink’s animal testing was never “exploratory,” but was instead conducted to confirm fully formed scientific hypotheses. “We are extremely careful,” he said.

Public records reviewed by WIRED, and interviews conducted with a former Neuralink employee and a current researcher at the University of California, Davis primate center, paint a wholly different picture of Neuralink’s animal research. The documents include veterinary records, first made public last year, that contain gruesome portrayals of suffering reportedly endured by as many as a dozen of Neuralink’s primate subjects, all of whom needed to be euthanized. These records could serve as the basis for any potential SEC probe into Musk’s comments about Neuralink, which has faced multiple federal investigations as the company moves toward its goal of releasing the first commercially available brain-computer interface for humans.

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