



Physical Restraint – Standard Operating Procedures

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1. Overview

Purpose

To assure appropriate IACUC oversight of physical restraint of animals and to ensure humane care and use of animals when such restraint is employed.

2. Definitions

Physical restraint is the use of manual or mechanical means to limit an animal's normal movement for such purposes as examination, collection of samples, or drug administration.

Prolonged physical restraint is when the mobility of animals is restricted for a period exceeding 60 minutes. Prolonged restraint must be scientifically justified and receive prior approval from the IACUC.

3. Procedure

All physical restraint procedures must be described and approved by the IACUC.

3.1 Principles

Several principles must be adhered to:

- Restraint devices must not be considered a normal method of housing and must be justified in the animal use protocol.
- Restraint devices must not be used simply as a convenience in handling or managing animals.
- Alternatives to physical restraint should be considered.
- The period of restraint should be the minimum required to accomplish the research objectives.
- Devices must be suitable in size, design, and operation to minimize discomfort and, whenever possible, they should minimize the extent of restraint.
- Depending on the species, animals should be trained (with positive reinforcement) to adapt to the equipment and personnel.
- Animals that fail to adapt should be removed from the study.
- Provision should be made for continuous observation of the animal while in the restraint device.
- Veterinary care must be provided if lesions or illness associated with restraint are observed. The presence of lesions, illness, or severe behavioral change often necessitates the temporary or permanent removal of the animal from restraint.
- The purpose of the restraint and its duration should be clearly explained to personnel involved with the study. Personnel should be adequately trained in the restraint procedure.



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4. Responsibilities

4.1 Drexel University IACUC’s Responsibilities

The Drexel University IACUC and the IACUC Office are responsible for maintaining this guidance document, training, and monitoring. All exceptions to this procedure must be approved by the IACUC. For inquiries regarding these procedures, please contact the Director of Animal Welfare, a part of the Office for Research & Innovation (ORI), or the Attending Veterinarian.

4.2 Principal Investigator’s Responsibilities

The Investigator is responsible for ensuring that everyone working on an applicable protocol adheres to this procedure.

5. Resources

- [Guide for the Care and Use of Animals in Research](#)

6. Revisions

Edition 001/Effective Date: 12/2003 – Original Document

Edition 001/Review Date: 04/2018-Original Document

Edition 001/Review Date: 09/2021-Original Document

Edition 002/Review/Revision Date:6/12/2024 and Effective Date: 06/26/2024 – Revised Document.

- Updated formatting to new template.
- Change title to “Physical Restraint Procedures”
- Addition of a Definitions Section
- Addition of Drexel IACUC responsibilities