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| Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee | | UNTHSC |
| Title: Prolonged Physical Restraint | | |
| Document #: 018 | Version #: 04 | |
| Approved by IACUC Date: March 6, 2023 | | |

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prolonged physical restraint may be stressful to the animal and should be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives and is specifically approved by the IACUC. All physical restraint for periods greater than 10 minutes must be specifically justified in the protocol for consideration and approval by the IACUC. Convenience alone is not adequate justification for the use of prolonged physical restraint.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. It is the Principal Investigator’s responsibility to follow this standard operating procedure.
- b. The IACUC is responsible for reviewing the scientific justification for prolonged restraint.

C. PROCEDURES

- a. All restraint methods, regardless of restraint duration should be described within the protocol. The restraint description should include the following information: the restraint type (i.e., manual, device, etc....), the duration of restraint, and the frequency in which the animal will be restrained.
- b. Animals restrained for greater than 10 minutes is considered prolonged physical restraint, and should only be used when necessary and justification would need to be provided. The following guidelines from *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* should be considered when justifying the need for prolonged physical restraint:
 - i. Restraint devices should not be considered a normal method of housing, and must be justified in the animal use protocol.
 - ii. Restraint devices should not be used simply as a convenience in handling or managing animals.
 - iii. Alternatives to physical restraint should be considered.
 - iv. The period of restraint should be the minimum required to accomplish the research objectives.
 - v. Animals to be placed in restraint devices should be given training (with positive reinforcement) to adapt to the equipment and personnel.
 - vi. Animals that fail to adapt should be removed from the study.
 - vii. Provision should be made for observation of the animal at appropriate intervals, as determined by the IACUC.
 - viii. Veterinary care must be provided if lesions or illnesses associated with restraint are observed. The presence of lesions, illness, or sever behavioral change often necessitates the temporary or permanent removal of the animal from restraint.
 - ix. The purpose of the restraint and its duration should be clearly explained to personnel involved with the study.

D. REFERENCES

- a. [The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(2011\), National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.](#)