



**THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE**

SUBJECT: Prolonged Physical Restraint

DATE: March 20, 2024

Prolonged Physical Restraint Guideline

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* states physical restraint is the use of manual or mechanical means to limit some or all of an animal's normal movement for the purpose of examination, collection of samples, drug administration, therapy, or experimental manipulation. Prolonged restraint should be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives. The use of prolonged restraint needs to be scientifically justified and must be approved by the IACUC. Restraint devices should be suitable in size, design, and operation to minimize discomfort or injury to the animal. Less restrictive systems that do not limit an animal's ability to make normal postural adjustments should be used if compatible with research or teaching objectives.

1. Prolonged restraint is defined as restraint greater than 30 minutes and considered a USDA Category E procedure.
2. Restraint devices are not to be considered a normal method of housing and must be justified in the protocol.
3. Restraint devices should not be used simply as a convenience in handling or managing animals.
4. Acclimation or habituation to restraint methods must be described in the protocol. It is recommended that animals should be acclimated to accept restraint. Prolonged restraint without acclimation or habituation must be scientifically justified in the protocol.
5. Animals that fail to adapt to the restraint device, and risk injuring themselves, should be removed from the study.
6. If feasible, continuous observation is preferable. If observation is not continuous it should be scientifically justified. Provision should be made for observation of the animal at appropriate intervals, over the course of the restraint period.
7. Veterinary care must be provided if lesions, injury, or illness associated with the restraint are observed. If severe lesions or illness are observed, animals must be temporarily or permanently removed from the restraint.

References

1. *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, 8th Edition. 2011. National Research Council Committee for the Update of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US).
2. *Animal Welfare Act*. United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. November 2013.