

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Southern Illinois University

Subject: Physical restraint of research and teaching animals

Purpose: To ensure only appropriate animal physical restraint.

Guidelines:

Physical restraint of animals is defined as manual or mechanical limitation of some or all of an animal's normal movement. Prolonged physical restraint of animals is defined by Southern Illinois University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) as any physical restraint of animals for a period of 30 minutes or more. All physical restraint methods proposed for animals must be described on the Animal Use Protocol form and approved by the IACUC before use. Proposals involving prolonged physical restraint of animals must also include a referenced scientific justification describing why it is necessary to perform prolonged physical restraint in order to meet the objectives of the proposed study.

Guidelines for physically restraining animals

- Restraint devices are not to be considered as normal methods of housing.
- Restraint devices must not be used simply as a convenience in handling or managing animals.
- The period of restraint must be the minimum required to accomplish the research objectives. Prolonged restraint, of 30 minutes or more, must be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives and is approved by the IACUC.
- Animals to be placed in restraint devices should be trained to adapt to the equipment and personnel.
- Provisions should be made for observation of the animal at appropriate intervals during the restraint period.
- Restraint devices should be suitable in size, design, and operation to minimize discomfort or injury to the animal. Veterinary care should be provided if lesions or illnesses associated with restraint are observed. The presence of lesions, illness, or severe behavioral change often necessitates temporary or permanent removal of the animal from restraint.
- Less restrictive systems that do not limit an animal's ability to make normal postural adjustments should be used when compatible with protocol objectives.
- Restraint devices should be designed to accomplish research goals that are impossible or impractical to accomplish by other means or to prevent injury to animals or personnel.