



Dartmouth College

Animal Care and Use Program

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

### IACUC Policies and Procedures

**Title:** Policy on Prolonged Physical Restraint

**Policy:** Prolonged physical restraint may be stressful to the animal and should be avoided unless essential to reach objectives. Physiologic, biochemical and hormonal changes occur in any restrained animal, including non-human primates. Investigators should consider how these effects would influence their proposed experiments. Physical restraint for periods longer than 1 hour must be described in detail and justified for consideration by the IACUC. When restraint is required for more than 24 hours, consideration must be given to using the least restrictive method possible, even though it may be more costly and technically more difficult.

**Procedure:** When prolonged physical restraint (>1 hour) is required, the following procedures must be used:

- Animals to be placed in restraint equipment should be conditioned to the equipment by gradually increasing times or restraint until required restraint and time is reached.
- The period of restraint must be limited to the minimum required to accomplish the research objectives. Consultation with staff veterinarians should be sought for restraint procedures to ensure that minimal restraint is used to accomplish the experimental goals.
- For comfort and safety of the animal, certain types of restraint equipment, such as slings for dogs, require that the animals be attended throughout the period of restraint. For each situation, the IACUC will make a determination as to the intensity of the attention required.
- Generally, chairing of non-human primates for periods longer than 24 hours is discouraged. When a reasonable alternative to prolonged chair restraint is not possible, the animals must be removed from the chair for exercise periods as long and as frequently as possible. Accurate daily records of food and water intake, weight, and bowel and bladder function must always accompany long-term restraint. This information should be entered on a record sheet and/or chart and should be available at all times for review by a veterinarian. Adequate access to food and water must be available.
- Attention must be given to the possible development of lesions or illnesses associated with restraint, including contusions, deductible ulcers, dependent edema and weight loss. If these or other problems occur, prompt veterinarian care must be provided. This may require temporary or permanent removal of the animal from restraint device. If the health problem is considered serious by the veterinarian attending the animal, the well being of the animal must take priority over the experiment objectives.