

IACUC Policy on Prolonged Physical Restraint

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Revised and Approved:	

Definition of physical restraint from the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition (the Guide):

“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. Animals are restrained for brief periods, usually minutes, in many research applications.

Prolonged restraint should be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives and is specifically approved by the IACUC .”

Guidelines for Restraint from the Guide and the Ag Guide:

- Restraint devices should not be considered a normal method of housing, and must be justified in the animal use protocol.
- Restraint devices should 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.
- Animals to be placed in restraint devices should be given training (with positive reinforcement) to adapt to the equipment and personnel.
 - unless the preconditioning itself would increase the stress to the animals. (Ag Animals)
- Electrical immobilization must not be used as a method of restraint. It is highly aversive to cattle and sheep.
- Animals that fail to adapt should be removed from the study.
- Provision should be made for observation of the animal at appropriate intervals, as determined by the IACUC.
- Veterinary care must be provided if lesions or illnesses 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.

The University of Hawaii IACUC recognizes 2 forms of prolonged restraint.

Prolonged physical restraint of laboratory or farm animals:

Unanesthetized animals restrained for 15 minutes or longer will be considered under prolonged physical restraint. Procedure details, including length of time in restraint, must be present in the IACUC protocol. Prolonged physical restraint of research animals may warrant placement of animals in pain category E unless shown otherwise by the investigator.

Restraint of wild species in management/field research protocols:

Restraint of animals in live traps and nets are routinely used to properly capture, restrain, and sample wild species. Snares or similar devices which potentially or are known to be injurious to animals will not

be considered or approved by the IACUC. In cases of routine capture of animals with proper consideration for checking traps overnight or more frequently, it is UH IACUC policy to place animals in Category C. If animals are chemically restrained after initial capture, they should be placed in Category D.