



**Policy Statement #17–13 Physical Restraint of Animals
Faculty of Science, Mahidol University–Institutional
Animal Care and Use Committee (MUSC–IACUC)**

Physical restraint of an awake, un-anesthetized animal may be necessary due to the scientific goals and/or for husbandry, both to accomplish treatment or scientific objectives. However, because prolonged restraint can be stressful and has the potential to cause harm to the restrained animal under certain circumstances, it is critical that considerable care and training be employed.

1. Restraint is a physiologic and psychological stressor. Prolonged physical restraint should be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives.
2. The principal investigator must provide scientific justification for prolonged restraint and should choose a method of restraint to minimize distress to the animal. Restraint devices should be suitable in size, design, and operation to minimize discomfort or injury to the animal.
3. The following should be considered by the Principal Investigator and IACUC in planning experimental procedures and the review and approval of the Animal Use Protocol:
 - a. Restraint devices are not considered normal methods of housing.
 - b. Restraint devices should not be used simply as a convenience in handling or managing animals.
 - c. The period of restraint should be the minimum required to accomplish the research objectives.
 - d. Animals to be placed in restraint devices should be trained to accept the restraint.
 - e. Provision should be made for observation and monitoring of the animal.
 - f. Occasionally, an animal will not adapt well to restraint. Therefore, criteria for the temporary or permanent removal of the animal from the study must be included in the protocol.
4. Restraint that does not require justification in an animal use protocol
 - a. Brief (< 15 minutes) physical restraint that is part of normal animal-handling practices (e.g., moving mice from one cage to another).
 - b. Brief manual restraint (< 15 minutes) for procedures such as substance administration or sample collection (e.g., restraint of an animal to draw a blood sample).
 - c. Brief mechanical restraint (< 15 minutes) of animals by personnel trained in the use of the device (e.g., restraint of a sheep in a squeeze chute by trained personnel to give a vaccination).
5. When prolonged restraint (restraint over 15 minutes) is proposed in an animal use protocol, the protocol must include:
 - a. A description of the restraint device
 - b. The duration the animal will be restrained

- c. A description of how the animal will be acclimated and trained prior to the procedure
- d. A description of how the animal will be observed during the procedure
- e. If the duration of prolonged restraint limits the ability of the animal to access food and water ≥ 6 hours, the protocol must also include:
 - Description of when food and water will be given
 - How body weight will be monitored
 - How hydration status will be monitored