

Policy on Food or Fluid Regulation or Restriction

Purpose

To provide investigators with guidelines for the proper monitoring and record keeping for animals undergoing food or fluid regulation or restriction.

PHS Policy and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* require enhanced monitoring of animals undergoing food or fluid regulation/restriction.

Policy/Procedures

Any food or fluid regulation or restriction that is not part of normal animal husbandry must be scientifically justified, reviewed and approved by the IACUC prior to implementation.

Control of food or fluid intake may be required for some physiological or behavioral experiments. This control may be:

- Regulation, involving scheduled access to food or fluid, so an animal consumes as much as desired at regular intervals.
- Restriction, in which the total volume of food or fluid consumed is strictly monitored and controlled.

A program to monitor the physiologic and behavior indexes must be established.

- At a minimum, daily logs of food or water intake should be maintained and body weight recorded at least once a week and criteria set for early removal from the study. Special attention should be given to ensure animals are consuming a balanced diet.
- For conditioned-response research protocols, use of a highly preferred food or fluid as positive-reinforcement is recommended in place of restriction.
- The development of protocols that involve food or fluid regulation/restriction **must address**:
 - The species, strain, gender, and age of the animal
 - The amount of food or fluid regulation/restriction (e.g., 85% of normal caloric intake)
 - The duration of food or fluid regulation/restriction
 - The nutritive value of any food or fluid used to replace normal rations
 - Potential adverse consequences of regulation
 - Methods for assessing the health and well-being of the animals
 - Criteria for removing an animal from food or fluid regulation/restriction

References

1. The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, 8th ed., NRC, ILAR 2011.
2. Augusta University, IACUC Policy Multiple Surgical Procedures 2013.