



The University of Georgia

Office of the Vice President for Research

UGA IACUC Policy on Food or Fluid Restriction

Effective August 21, 2008

Revised May 20, 2010

Restriction of food or fluids for research purposes must be scientifically justified and approved by the UGA IACUC. When experimental situations require food or fluid restriction, at least minimal quantities of food and fluid should be available to provide for development of young animals and to maintain long-term well-being of all animals. In addition to scientific justification, restriction protocols must include a program to monitor physiologic or behavioral indexes, including criteria (such as weight loss or state of hydration) for temporary or permanent removal of an animal from the experimental protocol. Restriction is typically measured as a percentage of the ad libitum or normal daily intake or as percentage change in an animal's body weight.

Precautions that should be used in cases of fluid restriction to avoid acute or chronic dehydration include daily recording of fluid intake and recording of body weight at least once a week or more often, as might be needed for small animals, such as rodents. Special attention should be given to ensuring that animals consume a suitably balanced diet because food consumption might decrease with fluid restriction.

The least restriction that will achieve the scientific objective should be used. In the case of conditioned-response research protocols, use of a highly preferred food or fluid as positive reinforcement, instead of restriction, is recommended.

This policy does not apply to dietary control for husbandry or clinical purposes under the direction of the Attending Veterinarian.

Key Food or Fluid Restriction Guidelines

- Restriction must be scientifically justified.
- The least restriction that will achieve the scientific objective should be used.
- Objective criteria must be defined (such as weight loss or state of hydration) for temporary or permanent removal of an animal from the experimental protocol.
- A monitoring program must be established which includes:
 - Daily observation of the animals including weekends and holidays.
 - A daily log sheet (example attached) must be maintained for each group of animals on restricted food or water protocols and kept with the animals in the animal room.
 - The log sheet must include AUP#, type of restriction, length of restriction, start and stop dates, number of cages or animals, and contact information.
 - Information to be logged daily must include verification of feeding/watering activities.
 - Health status of the animals
 - Any adverse events
 - Record of body weight or other objective data monitored at a frequency commensurate with species and degree of restriction.

References:

1. [The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), 1996
2. [FASS Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching, \(FASS Guide\)](#)

