



TITLE:
Food and/or Water Restriction: Principal Investigator (PI) Requirements

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this SOP is to give clear guidelines for investigators who choose to utilize food and or water restrictions for their animals.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Food and or water restriction is often utilized to motivate animals in behavioral tests. Food and water restriction paradigms differ. It is important that the details of specific experiments are provided in advance to AHCS staff because they are responsible for making sure that research animals have food and water. All food and water restriction must be approved by the respective animal care and use committees (ACUC). Only the restrictions that have been approved by these ACUCs can be utilized in the facility.

PROCEDURES:

- A. Prior to starting the food or water restriction study:
 1. Arrange a meeting with the room veterinarian and designated AHCS staff prior to the start of the study. This will ensure that cages are appropriately labeled and equipment-handling details are clear, such as whom to contact, alternate plan of action should special feed or water be found low, or if AHCS Staff may handle feeders or bottles without disruption to data collection.
- B. Animal care health section staff will explain the necessity of filling out the following
 1. How to complete the food and/or water restriction log (S:\AHCS_Shared\Facility\Facility Paperwork - Animal Rooms & Cagewash\Facility Husbandry Paperwork\Food Water Restriction Logs).
 - i. If the form needs to be customized for your studies, then this should be done by the room veterinarian at this time.
 2. How to complete the special husbandry flag (SHF) and where it should be placed.
 3. A practice run will occur of filling out the initial food/water logs and special husbandry flags (SHF) together.
 4. Points of contact information should be provided.
- C. Other information
 1. A technical request must be submitted and approved if AHCS staff is responsible for performing services for this cage.
 2. Special feeders, bottles, or equipment that is specific to the ASP/study, must be purchased and maintained by your lab.
 3. Checking, replacing, or refreshing the food or water and changing out and sanitizing the equipment is the responsibility of the lab. The AHCS will assist if possible.
 4. Body weights should be taken as specified in the approved ASP covering the work. Weights and any other pertinent health information must be available in the animal holding room.
- D. Food or water will be provided if:

- i. No signage is posted indicating that the cage is supposed to be without food or water.
- ii. The food or water log is not filled out.
- iii. There is a question of the animal's mortality due to the restriction.

REFERENCES:

1. Guidelines for Diet Control in Behavioral Animal Studies, ARAC Guidelines
2. Regarding the SHF flag refer to [SOP 3202 Cage Flag and Card System for Identifying Animal Cases in the NINDS AHCS Managed Animal Facilities](#)
3. Food and Water Restriction Log - [S:\AHCS_Shared\Facility\Facility Paperwork - Animal Rooms & Cagewash\Facility Husbandry Paperwork\Food Water Restriction Logs](#)

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Attachments:

None