University of Cincinnati
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Food or Fluid Regulation Requirements for Rodents

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) has established this policy to implement the food and fluid regulation requirements in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.

**Introduction**

Regulation of food or fluid are usually used in scientific studies for the following reasons: 1) homeostatic regulation of energy metabolism or food balance; 2) motivate behaviors and physiologic mediators of hunger and thirst; 3) regulate food consumption to motivate animals to perform learned tasks; 4) regulate food consumption to study the effect of caloric uptake on disease processes. Regulation must be scientifically justified in the approved IACUC protocol including the endpoints. Justification is not required for pre-surgical fasting.

**Definition of Regulation**

The volume of food or fluid is restricted (e.g. pair or limited feeding) including deprivation or scheduled (e.g. meal-feeding) which offers access to food or fluid at a regular interval of time.

**Applicability**

- This policy applies when a study involves regulation of food or fluid.
- Animals fed ad libitum including special diets, are excluded from this policy.

**Requirements during short periods of regulation**

When the period of regulation is less than 24 hours and occurs no more than once a week animals must be clearly identified with the following information:

- The type of regulation being performed
- The period which they will be regulated
- When regulations is complete, identifiers must be removed

The IACUC does not consider a period of regulation less than 24 hours and occurring less than once a week to have an ongoing clinical impact; as such individual records and weekly weights are not required. This deviation from the guide is consistent with longstanding institutional practices and available scientific data.

**Requirements during prolonged periods of regulation**

When the period of regulation is greater than 24 hours or occurs more than once a week animals undergoing regulation must be clearly identified with the following information:

- The type of regulation being performed
- The period which they will be regulated
- When regulations is complete, identifiers must be removed

In addition, written records must be maintained for each individual animal including:

- Body weights least weekly and more often for animals requiring greater restrictions.
• Document daily food and fluid consumption,
• Hydration status
• Any behavioral and clinical changes used as criteria for temporary or permanent removal of an animal from a protocol

Record Keeping and Retention
• Unless other arrangements have been made, the Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring these items are completed and documented as outlined above.
• Records must be removed when regulation is not occurring.
• Records must be maintained for the life of the animal.
• Records must be available upon request by the IACUC or any regulatory inspector.