

Anesthesia

Item 4 – Use of Paralytic Agents During Anesthesia

Although the use of paralytic agents is recognized as a necessary component of some experimental protocols, the use of these agents renders assessment of the level of general anesthesia much more difficult. Thus, the IACUC has adopted the following policy to ensure that paralyzed animals do not experience significant pain or distress:

- The use of paralytic agents requires justification in the animal use protocol.
- Paralysis should not be induced until the animal has reached a surgical plane of anesthesia (no response to toe pinch).
- To an extent consistent with the experimental protocol, potentially painful procedures should be minimized in paralyzed animals.
- The planned anesthetic regimen should be sufficient to prevent the animal from experiencing significant pain or distress. This shall be determined based upon previous experience, consultation with a veterinarian, documentation, and/or trial use in non-paralyzed animals exposed to the same planned experimental procedures.
- To the extent consistent with the experimental protocol, paralytics should be temporarily withheld periodically to reassess anesthetic depth (best accomplished by utilizing short-acting paralytics).
- During paralysis, adequacy of anesthesia should be assessed continuously by monitoring heart rate and/or blood pressure. Temperature should also be monitored and maintained within normal parameters. If necessary, provisions for voiding urine should be provided.

Adopted: 02/10/2014

Reviewed: 06/13/2022