

December 1, 2008

Minority Opinion - [REDACTED] - protocol: [REDACTED]

Submitted by:

NAME

Background - initially mice under this protocol were under category E due to 50% food restriction while pregnant. However, the ARC recently determined that category D better describes the experience of these animals.

The decision to change to category D was made because food restricted pregnant dams were found with food remaining in their cages for the first 4 days of restriction and only weighed 10% less than non-food restricted controls.

I strongly disagree with this designation. Mothers were food restricted for 10 days in this protocol (days 9-19). I find it unacceptable not to consider the last 6 days of food restriction. Similarly, to simply note that food was left in the cage is not adequate. We need to know when they were fed their 1.5g of chow and when the food was checked. It is conceivable that they were fed and then checked within 1 hour.

Similarly I don't feel that a minimal 10% weight loss can be interpreted to indicate a lack of distress. It is likely that a significantly larger fraction of maternal resources are allocated to the pups relative to free feeding control dams and this may severely compromise the psychological state of the dam.

The USDA offers the following guidance when categorizing animals.

As signs of pain may vary from animal to animal, the operational definition of pain described (in) the U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization of and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research and Training is often the easiest to apply. This definition states, "**Unless the contrary is established, investigators should consider that procedures that cause pain or distress in human beings may cause pain and distress in other animals.**" In defining animal stress, we must properly distinguish between "stress" and "distress." The National Research Council (1992) appropriately defines distress as "an aversive state in which an animal is unable to adapt completely to stressors and the resulting stress and shows maladaptive behaviors."

I do not believe that the contrary has been established to indicate a lack of distress. Therefore I maintain that these mice should be classified in category E.

Respectfully,

NAME