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CAR3: GUIDELINE ON ACCLIMATION PERIOD FOR ANIMALS USED IN RESEARCH, TEACHING, OR TESTING

To prevent additional stress to recently transported animals and to avoid confounding of research data due to a lack of homeostasis following shipping, Michigan State University has established acclimation guidelines.

Animals coming from outside sources, other than those exempted below, should be allowed a period of rest for physiological, psychological, and nutritional stabilization before their use. Based upon descriptions in veterinary literature, animals may not return to baseline physiologic parameters for more than 14 days following transportation to a novel environment. The length of acclimation will depend on various factors such as the type and duration of animal transportation, species involved, and housing, feed and intended use of the animals.

The completion of the acclimation period is not a replacement for a quarantine period, although the acclimation and quarantine periods may run concurrently.

It is recommended that a minimum of 72 hours be provided for acclimation for all species arriving from outside sources.

Certain groups of animals may be exempt from these guidelines, including:

1. Those for which the PI receives an exemption from the IACUC after providing scientific justification stating why acclimation is not necessary for animal use.
2. Those animals that are moving from an intra-campus facility/farm to another of similar environmental parameters and housing status.
3. Client-owned animals that will return to their home environment.
4. Those undergoing immediate terminal procedures. (Note: the research team should consider the effect that transportation stress may impart on the experimental data outcomes.)
5. Those which are wild-caught and will be returned to the wild after procedures. Acclimation is not advised in wild animals that will be released.

References

Conour LA, Murray KA, Brown MJ. Preparation of Animals for Research: Issues to Consider for Rodents and Rabbits. *ILAR* 47 (4): 283-293, 2006.

Obernier, JA. 2006. Establishing an Appropriate Period of Acclimation following transportation of laboratory animals *ILAR* 47(4): 364-369.

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition. NRC, 2011; pg. 111.

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