

Use of Ether for Anesthesia in Animal Research

Concerns and Background

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) [“Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals” \(2013\)](#) has determined that the use of ether for euthanasia of animals is **not acceptable**, and the OSU IACUC adheres to this position.

Primary concerns related to ether use are:

- Ether is flammable, its use creates potential for explosion, and represents a personal safety issue.
- Ether is highly soluble, induces anesthesia slowly, and may be accompanied by agitation.
- Ether is irritating in animals, especially to eyes and nose, and has been used to create a model for stress.

Together, ether represents both an animal welfare and human safety concern. Use of ether for anesthesia is not recommended.

It is the policy of OSU’s IACUC that:

- Ether is **not acceptable** for euthanasia, and **not recommended** for anesthesia.
- The investigator must provide compelling scientific justification for the use of ether for anesthesia in animals, and explain why alternative anesthetics cannot be used.
- Justifications based solely on cost, ease of use, or past history are not acceptable.