

Body Condition Scoring for Mice

Description of Procedure

Scoring the body condition of rodents is a non-invasive method for assessing health and establishing endpoints for adults where body weight is not a viable monitoring tool, such as with tumor models, ascites production and pregnancy, or for young growing animals.

Body condition scores (BCS) range from 1 (emaciation) to 5 (obesity). An anticipated BCS of 2 – under-conditioned – or lower, requires justification in the protocol.

Scores are determined by frequent visual and hands-on examination of each animal. The hands-on evaluation is done by gently holding the mouse by the base of the tail and passing a finger over the sacroiliac bones. The findings are matched to the descriptions and diagrams on the following page to determine a score.



BC 1

Mouse is emaciated.

- *Skeletal structure extremely prominent; little or no flesh cover.*
- *Vertebrae distinctly segmented.*



BC 2

Mouse is underconditioned.

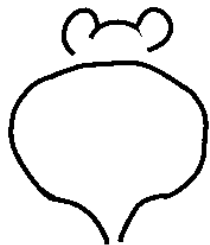
- *Segmentation of vertebral column evident.*
- *Dorsal pelvic bones are readily palpable.*



BC 3

Mouse is well-conditioned.

- *Vertebrae and dorsal pelvis not prominent; palpable with slight pressure.*



BC 4

Mouse is overconditioned.

- *Spine is a continuous column.*
- *Vertebrae palpable only with firm pressure.*



BC 5

Mouse is obese.

- *Mouse is smooth and bulky.*
- *Bone structure disappears under flesh and subcutaneous fat.*

A "+" or a "-" can be added to the body condition score if additional increments are necessary (i.e. ...2+, 2, 2-...)