

## Animal care and use statement

Dear Editor,

**Title:** Optimal timing for the oral administration of Da-Cheng-Qi Decoction based on the pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic targeting of the pancreas in rats with acute pancreatitis

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**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 35253

The animal protocol was designed to minimize pain or discomfort to the animals. The animals were acclimatized to laboratory conditions ( $22 \pm 2$  °C,  $65 \pm 10\%$  relative humidity, ad libitum access to water and feeding with laboratory rodent chow (Chengdu, China)) for one week and fasted for 12 h prior to experimentation. Intra-gastric gavage administration was carried out with conscious animals, using straight gavage needles appropriate for the animal size (280~300 g body weight). All animals were euthanized by 10% chloral hydrate overdose (intraperitoneal injection, 5 mL/kg body weight).

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