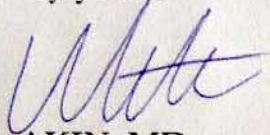


**Animal care and use statement:**

The animal protocol was designed to minimize pain or discomfort to the animals. Animals were housed in a temperature-controlled room ( $23 \pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) with illumination (12 hours each of light and darkness) during the study period. Animals were placed in separate cages and fed with standard food. Cables were laid in the cages to prevent coprophagy. All animals received care in compliance with the "Principles of Laboratory Animal Care" ([www.nap.edu/catalog/5140.html](http://www.nap.edu/catalog/5140.html)).

Sincerely yours,



**Mete AKIN, MD**

Department of Gastroenterology  
Akdeniz University School of Medicine  
Dumlupınar Bulvarı, 07058 Antalya, Turkey  
Telephone: +90-242-2496000  
Fax: +90-242-2496040  
E-mail: [drmeteakin@hotmail.com](mailto:drmeteakin@hotmail.com)