

Animal care and use statement

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Title: Sex Differences and Effects of Oestrogen in Rat Gastric Mucosal Defence

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Animal care and use statement:

The animal protocol was designed to minimise pain or discomfort to the animals. The rats were kept in standardised conditions of temperature (21-22°C) and ambient lighting using a 12 hour night and day cycle. Rats were allowed to acclimatise in wide cages with a mesh bottom and free access to pelleted food and tap water for at least seven days before the experiments started. Before each experiment they were fasted for 18-20 hours with free access to water. To avoid additional stress the animals were handled as little as possible outside their cages and administered 120 mg kg⁻¹ of thiobutabarbital sodium intraperitoneally to induce anaesthesia before being returned to the cage. After an appropriate length of time the level of anaesthesia was evaluated by the reactions of the eye-lid and foot to tactile and painful stimulus respectively. If anaesthesia was deemed non-sufficient an additional bolus of thiobutabarbital sodium was administered when necessary during the

experimental procedure. No opioids or other analgesics were administered to the animals. Core body temperature was kept at 37-38°C using a heating pad connected to a rectal thermistor. A PE-200 cannula was inserted into the trachea to facilitate spontaneous breathing. After the end of each experiment all animals were euthanised with an intravenous injection of saturated potassium chloride solution.

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