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Maintenance and medication of cervid models for research

In order to study the pathogenesis of chronic wasting disease in controlled conditions, researchers at Colorado State University, Fort Collins maintain captive populations of Reeve's muntjac deer and white-tailed deer, which must be housed indoors to limit exposure and cross-contamination of experimental animals. Erin McNulty and colleagues have identified some specific practices that allow their program to successfully maintain these colonies and handle these animals for research. They describe how they accommodate some of the unique physiological and behavioral aspects of these uncommon research models, with particular focuses on husbandry and anesthetic medication. Such first-hand experiences could be of great use to any researchers considering studies involving cervid species in captivity.

[See page 140](#)

Underpinnings of reproductive differences in Goto-Kakizaki rats

Different strains of mice and rats often require different husbandry practices, and some important disease models are difficult to breed using common practices. This is the case with Goto-Kakizaki rats, which closely model type 2 diabetes but exhibit poor fertility compared to Wistar rats. Ana Pinto-Souza *et al.* compared reproductive parameters of Goto-Kakizaki and Wistar rats at different stages of development and maturation in order to understand and address complicating factors in the husbandry of this disease model. They found that at 6 months Goto-Kakizaki rats had abnormal estrous cycles, spending more time in proestrus and less time in estrus each cycle, compared to Wistar rats. This discernible difference could stem from the rats' diabetic condition, and its absence among younger rats suggests that breeding programs can achieve greater success by breeding Goto-Kakizaki rats at earlier ages.

[See page 143](#)