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Rabbit anesthesia made easy

There is no easy way to intubate a rabbit, but this method remains a common route for anesthesia administration in lagomorphs. In search of an alternative, Kazakos *et al.* tested the laryngeal mask airway (LMA) apparatus in rabbits undergoing surgery under spontaneous breathing inhalational anesthesia. Although the LMA is commonly used in humans and has been evaluated in sundry animal species, the device has not been assessed for use in rabbits during surgery. Kazokos found the device to be both easy to insert and effective in anesthetizing the rabbits, concluding that the LMA is a suitable (and perhaps superior) alternative to endotracheal intubation for surgical anesthesia in rabbits. **See page 29**

Chicken sedation: an anti-emetic put to new use

Metoclopramide is generally used to prevent vomiting and facilitate gastric movement, but the drug has also been shown to induce sedation in humans and to depress the central nervous system in chickens. Mohammad *et al*. further explored the potential sedative and hypnotic effects of metoclopramide administered in combination with ketamine, an established anesthetic for human and veterinary use. The results of their study in 1–3-week-old chicks suggest that a metoclopramide-ketamine combination lowers the median effective doses of both drugs for the induction of sedation and sleep in chicks, and therefore represents a novel regime for restraining avian species in research. **See page 35**

Hamster handling stress

Environmental enrichment in many instances is an effective way to reduce stress in laboratory animals. For golden hamsters, that enrichment often takes the form of deeper litter—a measure shown to decrease wire-gnawing and other stereotypic stress-related behaviors. But deeper litter has another consequence: it takes longer to find and retrieve the animals for experimental procedures, itself a potential source of stress for the hamsters. By measuring serum levels of corticosterone, cortisol, and ACTH, Gebhardt-Henrich *et al.* attempted to determine whether the increased handling time for golden hamsters housed in deep litter actually has the cumulative effect of elevating stress levels, as indicated by hormone concentrations. **See page 41**