Thinking about the thermostat

A human that gets too cold can grab a sweater or a blanket; if they get too hot, layers can be shed. Animals don't quite have that luxury, or the ability to control their thermostat. But, ambient temperature can influence physiological variables like metabolism, even though an animal may seem healthy and content. A growing body of literature suggests that lab temperatures for mice might be on the cold side, with sometimes drastic impacts on scientific outcomes as a result. A new Technology Feature considers the temperature variable in biomedical research, and some of the ways that it can be controlled.

See 'Out of the cold' by Esther Landhuis

Pet policy

Veterinary medicine is always looking to develop new drugs and treatments for animal patients. When something promising emerges that might soon be ready for the clinic, veterinarians will conduct trials that often involve pet animals. The May Protocol Review asks how much information an IACUC needs to assess such trials, and where standard veterinary care ends and its oversight begins.

See 'Protocols for pets: what authority does an IACUC have?' by Jerald Silverman

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