

Three fingers better than two?

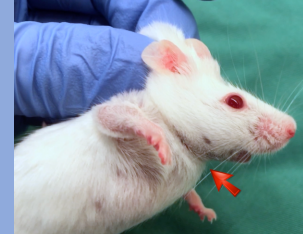
A proposal for refinement of the traditional method of scruffing

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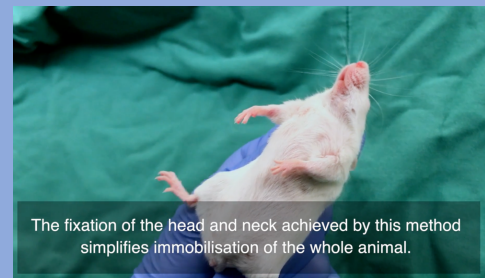
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The traditional method of scruffing animals, with two fingers, tends to create a longitudinal fold of skin along the dorsal aspect of the animal's neck. This can easily create pressure on the throat area, which may be unpleasant for the animal. This is illustrated here on a mouse, but the same principle applies to other species:



Furthermore, this technique does not provide good immobilisation of the head, increasing the risk of the operator being bitten, since the animal is able to turn its head to one side.

These problems can be avoided if the skin is gathered up in a **transverse** fold across the neck instead:



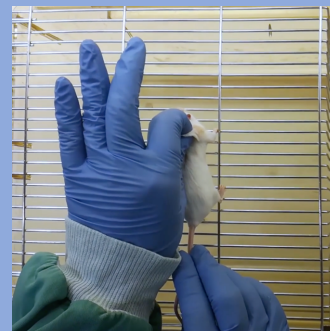
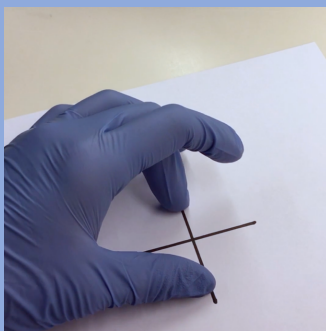
This is achieved by first gripping the skin fold with the thumb and middle finger, and then substituting the middle finger with the index finger, creating a transverse fold instead of a longitudinal one. The transverse skin fold can then be rolled up the neck between the thumb and index finger, immobilising the head in the process. This provides a safety check: if the animal's nose can be raised by rolling the skin between the thumb and index finger, then the skin is sufficiently taut to prevent the animal from turning its head to one side.



We have produced a 2-minute film showing how to perform this technique:

<https://norecopa.no/scruff>

Both two-handed and one-handed techniques are demonstrated.



What do you think of this technique?

Would you like to see optional subtitles in other languages?

Please contact us on adrian.smith@norecopa.no or Twitter: [@norecopa](https://twitter.com/norecopa)

Thanks to Dr. Rafael Frías for providing the Spanish translation of the film text.

Norecopa gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Finn Rahn's legacy, Dag Stiansen's Foundation, Laboratory Animals Ltd., the Nordic Society against Painful Animal Experiments (NSMSD), the Norwegian Animal Protection Alliance, the Norwegian Society for Protection of Animals, Novo Nordisk, Sanofi, the Scottish Accreditation Board, the US Department of Agriculture and the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW).