

# Saphenous Vein Bleed

## Mouse, Rat, Gerbil, Hamster, Guinea Pig



The saphenous vein is located on the lateral (outside) side of the lower back leg (right below the knee). The fur over the area should be clipped to allow easier visualization and prevent blood seeping into the fur. The animal need not be anesthetized, but must be restrained manually or in a device which allows access to the back legs. A 50ml conical tube, with holes for air drilled into the sides, or a DeCapicone® are convenient restrainers. The vessel can be enlarged by putting pressure on the leg above the knee (holding off the vein). The skin can be moistened with sterile lubricant gel, if needed, to visualize the vessel. Alcohol is not recommended, as it will allow the blood to seep across the skin, rather than form a drop for easy collection. The vessel is punctured perpendicularly by a needle (see Table). Blood should form a drop which can be collected via a microhematocrit tube. Flexing the foot may increase the flow of blood.

**Limit attempts to a maximum of three punctures on a leg.** Once adequate volume has been collected, pressure should then be applied to the puncture site until bleeding dissipates.

Species	Needle Size
Mouse	25g
Rat	20-24g
Gerbil	22-25g
Hamster	20-24g
Guinea Pig	20-24g