Currently, there is no consensus among laboratories around the world on the selection of endpoint (criteria establishing the age at which mice are euthanized for the humane treatment of animals in research) in mouse models of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Our manuscript weds both the science of neurodegenerative/neuromuscular diseases, specifically ALS, and ethics.

Neurodegenerative and neuromuscular disease researchers are obliged to follow research ethics board legislation when using animal models. Our manuscript is novel as it attempts to determine a universal common endpoint in a mouse model of ALS. Laboratories around the world using different endpoints will potentially euthanize their research animals at different time points independent of the treatment used simply due to variability within endpoint criteria. Our results show that we can substitute the most commonly used endpoint in mouse models of ALS (the righting reflex) with an earlier endpoint, effectively sparing undue suffering of animals while maintaining high academic standards of research.

Establishing a universal endpoint for mouse models of ALS will allow researchers using this animal model to directly compare their results with other laboratories around the world who use different endpoints. We expect other researchers using different animal models of neurodegenerative and neuromuscular diseases to follow suit and expedite discovery in science.

Reference: Solomon JA, Tarnopolsky MA, **Hamadeh MJ**. One universal common endpoint in mouse models of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. PLoS One. 2011;6(6):e20582.

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