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Can you handle it? Validating negative responses to restraint in cats

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Highlights

- Responses to full-body restraint (FBR) were compared to passive restraint (PR)
- Behavioural and physiological measures were assessed during and after restraint
- Struggling increased while cats were being placed into FBR
- Lip licks, ears side and back, respiration, and pupil dilation increased during FBR
- Following FBR cats were more likely to jump off the exam table

Abstract

Cats routinely undergo handling and restraint for examinations and procedures throughout their lifetime. In recent years there has been increased awareness that some forms of restraint have the potential to negatively impact cat health and welfare, but there has been limited research to assess alternatives. Full-body restraint is known to be aversive and cause stress responses across a range of species. The current study therefore validated measures for identifying negative cat responses to handling by comparing

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