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Illumination and Food Deprivation as Determinants for Hoarding in Golden Hamsters

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Poster Presentation P26

**ILLUMINATION AND FOOD DEPRIVATION AS DETERMINANTS FOR
HOARDING IN GOLDEN HAMPSTERS**

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It is important for animals to adapt to changes in food availability in order to survive. Hoarding is one method of accomplishing this and the golden hamster (*Mesocricetus Auratus*) is particularly adept at hoarding. Previous literature suggests a connection between hoarding and stress. Therefore, the present study examined the effects of illumination and food deprivation on the hoarding behavior of male golden hamsters. The within-subjects design allowed each of the 12 subjects to be tested in each of the 4 conditions: 1) illumination and food deprivation, 2) illumination and no food deprivation, 3) food deprivation and no illumination, and 4) no illumination and no food deprivation. The results indicated that subjects in the “no illumination and no food deprivation” condition hoarded the greatest number of pellets followed by “illumination and no food deprivation,” then “illumination and food deprivation,” then “food deprivation and no illumination”. The data also show that both deprivation conditions produced more food consumption than the other conditions; this may account for the limited hoarding in the “food deprivation and no illumination” condition. The results suggest that stress may not play a significant role in the hoarding behavior of the golden hamster.