



Elevated Plus-Maze

The elevated plus-maze (EPM) has proven to be a valid and reliable test for the selective identification of anxiolytic and anxiogenic drug effects in both rats and mice. The EPM is composed of four arms with two different geometric characteristics, each differing from the others by the presence or absence of walls. Normal exploratory behavior in rats and mice is in the favor of the closed arms, and this tendency to stay in the closed arms of the maze can be enhanced by compounds that increase the aversion towards the anxiety-provoking open arms (i.e., anxiogenics). In contrast, administration of anxiolytic compounds reduces the natural aversion to the open arms and promotes the exploration thereof.