New Zealand white rabbits
(n = 16)

Control mechanical ventilation with BIPAP at baseline

Ventilator settings:
- $P_1$ resulting in a VT 10-15 ml/kg; $RR$ adjusted to maintain PaCO$_2$ within 35-60 mmHg; $FiO_2 = 0.5$; $PEEP = 2$ cmH$_2$O; $I:E = 1:1$.

randomize

Control Ventilation Group
(n = 8)

Control ventilation with BIPAP for 8 hours

Ventilator settings:
- Same as baseline

Sacrifice
(n = 8)

Spontaneous Breathing Group
(n = 8)

Spontaneous breathing with BIPAP for 8 hours

Ventilator settings:
- $RR$ adjusted to 30 breaths/min to regain unsupported spontaneous breathings in any phase of BIPAP mode; $P_1$, $FiO_2$, $PEEP$ and $I:E$ were the same as baseline.

Sacrifice
(n = 8)