

CHAPTER 6

VETERINARY MEDICAL CARE

I. Animal Procurement

The Animal Care Manager and/or the Veterinarian must approve all shipments of animals to ARC facilities. Rodents are procured from commercial laboratory animal facilities or from other institutions. Health records are sent from the vendors that detail health monitoring studies performed at the facilities to ensure the healthy status of the animals shipped to purchasers. Similar health monitoring data must be obtained from animals obtained from inter-institutional transfers. USDA covered species are procured from USDA licensed dealers. Frogs are ordered from aquatic animal supply houses or obtained from the wild. Fish are obtained from the wild, from other institutions or purchased from vendors. All regulations must be followed for the procurement of fish from out of state entities.

II. Animal Transportation

The IACUC has approved transportation guidelines for transportation of mammals and birds on campus, between local institutions and out of state. The IACUC also has transportation guidelines for fish and frogs. The guidelines can be found at the Animal Care Program website. Rodents and birds can be transported within the campus facilities in covered ventilated shoebox cages or boxes. ARC staff must coordinate the shipment of all animals to other institutions locally and out of state. The ARC office will set up the health monitoring program needed to enable shipments of mammals or birds. The transportation form for birds and mammals must be completed for local transport and the shipment form must be completed for further destinations.

The transportation form for aquatic species must be completed for animals being shipped out or received. A procurement form must be completed by entities receiving fish. It is the responsibility of the investigator to find out the health monitoring information needed by the receiving institution. Investigators shipping aquatic species are responsible for securing the necessary health records.

III. Preventative Medicine

Quarantine, Stabilization and Separation

Animals should be checked upon arrival for overt signs of injury or illness by the Animal Care Manager or other trained personnel responsible for unpacking the animals. Investigators or their trained staff will check frogs and fish upon arrival for any signs of illness or stress. The Veterinarian will perform any necessary medical tests.

The IACUC has established guidelines for quarantine procedures for rodents in ARC facilities. All mammals are separated into rooms by species. Mammals are further separated into rooms by their sources if possible unless the investigator requests the animals to be housed in the same room for research purposes. There are bio-security

plans in place at the School of Freshwater Sciences for aquatic species that are in medically separated facilities. Aquatic species may be separated by room, rack or tank.

Animals should be maintained in their home cages/pens for at least 48 hours prior to use in teaching or research activities. This is considered to be the **minimum** amount of time to allow for a period of initial physiological, psychological and nutritional stabilization. The length of time necessary for stabilization depends on the species involved, type and duration of transport, and intended use of the animals. The researcher should evaluate whether additional stabilization time would be necessary and appropriate. Animals may be excluded from coverage of this policy and utilized within 48 hours of arrival for the following reasons:

1. Animals are to undergo immediate terminal procedures
2. PI provides justification explaining why stabilization is not necessary for their approved animal use.

Isolation rooms are available in ARC facilities. Animals that are ill are reported to the Animal Care Manager and/or the Veterinarian who will determine whether they need to be isolated. In general, investigators are encouraged to isolate animals that may be contagious to others to ensure the safety of the rest of the colony. Aquatic species can be isolated by tank or rack if needed.

III. Surveillance, Diagnosis, Treatment and Control of Disease

The Veterinarian, Animal Care Manager, ARC staff and investigators or their staff observe all mammals, birds and aquatic species on a daily basis including weekends and holidays. Work-charts are posted in all bird/mammal rooms that should be initialed by the person doing the daily check. Work-charts or logbooks should be located near to aquatic animal housing.

Individuals should contact the Animal Care Manager and/or Veterinarian, as well as the investigator, if they suspect an animal is sick or injured. The Veterinarian will give advice for treatment and the use of appropriate medications. The Veterinarian is available to perform routine necropsies and can be contacted to obtain samples to send out to local laboratories for diagnostic purposes.

All instructions regarding the provision of veterinary care will be done directly between the Veterinarian and the responsible party. The Veterinarian will inform the Animal Care Manager and the investigator of diagnostic procedures and treatments. All medications will be given under the advice and supervision of the Veterinarian. Records of medications given to rodents or other species should be written on the work charts and initialed by the responsible party.

All rodents are monitored by vendor surveillance. Subclinical microbial, particularly viral, infections occur frequently in conventionally maintained rodents. Some infectious agents can be subclinical but induce profound immunologic changes or alter physiologic, pharmacologic or toxicologic responses. Scientific objectives of a particular protocol, the consequences of infection within a specific strain of rodent, and the adverse effects that infectious agents might have on other protocols in a facility should determine the

characteristics of rodent health-surveillance programs and strategies for keeping rodents free of specific pathogens. Note: Transplantable tumors, hybridomas, cell lines, and other biologic materials can be sources of murine viruses that can contaminate rodents.

A routine health monitoring program for the ARC facilities includes the use of sentinel animals and dirty bedding transfer or PCR for the mouse breeding colonies and animals being transported to other institutions. Health monitoring is performed annually for mouse breeding colonies and as often as needed for animals being transported to other institutions or to get an animal out of quarantine if they came from another institution. Necropsies and some parasitology tests may be performed by the Veterinarian. A health monitoring program will be implemented if requested by an investigator for any type of animal room. If animals are transferred to another institution the health monitoring program at the institution will be implemented.

IV. Provisions for Emergency, Weekend and Holiday Care

Weekend and holiday care will be provided by the Animal Care Manager, the Veterinarian, ARC staff, investigators, or research staff. The Veterinarian is available on a 24 hour on-call basis. When the Veterinarian is out of town the University has arranged for another Lab animal Veterinarian to take any potential calls. The University has an emergency manual and a continuation of operations plan (COOP) that outlines what to do in emergency situations. The Veterinarian and Animal Care Manager should be contacted if the situation presents any type of danger to the animals' well being.

V. Genetics and Nomenclature

Investigators are encouraged to contact the veterinarian for any questions regarding the use of standardized nomenclature or breeding colony maintenance. Breeding records should be maintained by the investigator. Health surveillance programs instituted to ensure that the colony is healthy and free of sub-clinical disease.

VI. Drug Storage and Control

Investigators are responsible for the acquisition, licensing, storage, use, and disposal of controlled substances that they may use for research purposes. See the Animal Care Program's website for instructions on how to obtain controlled substances and how to dispose of them. Individuals who purchase controlled drugs are responsible to keep a log book of their use by each milliliter (ml). Investigators are responsible to check their own drugs regularly to dispose of out-of-date drugs. The IACUC will also check drugs and log books during regularly scheduled tours to ensure that investigators are not using out-of-date drugs.

