

SOP #: 312.01Title: SOP - Care of Sick or Injured Animals

Approvals:

Attending Veterinarian

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Date:

10/11/12

Assistant Director LAR

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Date:

10/11/12

1. Purpose

1.1 To set guidelines for the care of sick or injured animals.

2. Responsibility

2.1 ACF Personnel

3. Definitions

3.1 ACF - Animal Care Facility

4. Guidelines

4.1 Guidelines are based upon subjective and objective observations, along with the assessment of the animals in the animal facility. The following procedures conducted during a routine daily exam are meant to be guidelines, based upon individual studies and cases.

4.2 Examination of a sick animal should include:

4.2.1 Observations: activity, alertness, appetite, response, suspected signs of pain, distress or injury; surgery site (if applicable); knowledge of important history (e.g. recent surgery, diabetic animal).

4.2.2 Clinical observation: mucous membrane color, hydration, respiration, coughing, nasal and /or ocular discharge, shaking/scratching head, pruritis, vomiting, diarrhea, straining (urination or defecation), hematuria, obvious signs of pain, distress or injury; overall clinical appearance; surgery site (if applicable).

- 4.2.3 Measurements: blood glucose, weight, food fed, water consumption, urine volume, temperature, urinalysis, urine glucose and ketones – diabetic rodents.
- 4.2.4 Exercise – observation: abnormality in gait, movement.
- 4.2.5 The clinical signs will be evaluated, and classified in general as:
 - 4.2.5.1 Single treatment in-house, no isolation needed, no follow-up needed, no special diagnostics needed, remains in study. (e.g. cleaning ears)
 - 4.2.5.2 More than one day treatment, no isolation needed, no further diagnostics needed requires follow-up exam/evaluation, remains in study. (e.g. urinary tract infection, intradermal cysts, mild dermatitis, bite wounds)
 - 4.2.5.3 More than one day treatment, no isolation needed, further diagnostics needed, requires follow-up exam/evaluation, may remain in study until further evaluation (e.g. Chronic urinary tract infection)
 - 4.2.5.4 More than one day treatment needed, requires isolation, further diagnostics needed, requires follow-up, and may be removed from study until further evaluation. (e.g. coughing, diarrhea)
 - 4.2.5.5 More than one day treatment needed requires isolation, further diagnostics needed, requires follow-up, removed from the study, requires euthanasia. (e.g. parvovirus, broken leg)
- 4.2.6 Classification may not be easy in each case, but the purpose is to recognize, document, and provide the laboratory animal's adequate veterinary care under the guidelines of IACUC as needed, 24 hours/day.
- 4.2.7 Methods to access veterinary medical care shall be posted in the facility, available to all personnel including back-up coverage.

4.3 Criteria for euthanasia

- 4.3.1 Guidelines for sick or moribund animals are usually outlined in each protocol, and are approved by IACUC prior to the study. Exceptions are permitted only if approved by the IACUC. The following area a summary of criteria for euthanasia:
 - 4.3.1.1 Weight loss: loss of 20-25% (depending on weight at arrival, age, attitude), or if not measured, characterized by muscle wasting.
 - 4.3.1.2 Inappetance: complete anorexia for more that 1-2 days in small rodents, up to 5 days in large animals, along with weight loss and dehydration.

- 4.3.1.3 Weakness/inability to obtain food and/or water: inability to stand along with weight loss and dehydration or extreme reluctance to stand; move about for several hours (assuming recovery from anesthesia); extreme lethargy.
 - 4.3.1.4 Moribund state: depression along with sub-normal body temperature, non-responsive to stimulation.
 - 4.3.1.5 Infection: infection involving any organ system which fails to respond to antibiotic and supportive care within an appropriate time frame, accompanied by signs of systemic illness.
 - 4.3.1.6 Signs of severe organ dysfunction non-responsive to treatment, very poor to grave prognosis as determined by the attending veterinarian.
- 4.4 The Attending Veterinarian and the Principal Investigator (PI) shall be informed if any animal demonstrates any of the above conditions prior to euthanasia. Upon review and approval by the Attending Veterinarian and PI euthanasia may be performed.
- 4.5 In case of regulated species, one or both shall be present for the procedure, and a necropsy shall be performed as outlined in the protocol, unless otherwise noted.
- 4.6 In case of an emergency whereas an animal is suffering severe pain and/or distress, euthanasia may be performed with the knowledge and consent of the AV with a necropsy being performed at that time, or store @ 2-8°C for necropsy within 1day, or as directed by AV.
- 4.7 Euthanasia will be carried out following acceptable methods as outlined in the 2007 AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia for specific species.

5. References

- 5.1 Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals 8th Edition (NRC 2011)
- 5.2 2007 AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia