



Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidelines and Policies

Approved 11/15/06

POLICY ON MULTIPLE MAJOR SURVIVAL SURGERY

Definitions:

Major Surgical Procedure: is defined as a procedure that “*penetrates and exposes a body cavity or produces substantial impairment of physical or physiologic functions*” (from the NRC Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals).

This includes: craniotomy; ocular surgery; laparotomy, including ovariectomy; thoracotomy, orthopedic surgery, peripheral nerve injury, limb amputation and others. Note that postoperative analgesics are required for major survival procedures, unless there is a strong scientific justification otherwise.

Multiple major survival surgery is defined as more than one major operative procedure in which the animal is allowed to recover from the anesthesia.

Minor Surgical Procedure: is defined as a procedure that “*does not expose a body cavity and causes little or no physical impairment*” (from the NRC Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals).

This includes: wound suturing; peripheral-vessel cannulation; vascular cutdowns; subcutaneous mini-pump placement; routine male castration (but not female); and most procedures that are typically done on an ‘outpatient’ basis in veterinary clinical practice). At least one dose of an analgesic agent is recommended for minor surgical procedures.

Performance of more than one major survival surgery on a single animal is discouraged by the IACUC unless strong justification is provided by the investigator. It is preferable to use more animals to reduce the amount of pain/distress individual animals may experience undergoing multiple major survival surgical procedures. Each protocol proposing the use of multiple major survival surgery will be considered and reviewed by the IACUC on a case-by-case basis.

Multiple major survival surgery may be justified:

- If it is a scientifically necessary, related component of the same research project.
- If it conserves scarce animal resources, such as non-human primates or rare species.
- If it is necessary for veterinary care reasons, i.e. animal health.

Cost savings alone is **NEVER** an adequate reason for multiple major survival surgery.