

	UCSD INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE POLICY MANUAL	POLICY #6.04  Approval 7/13/01 Revision 6/20/03 Revision 11/17/04 Revision 6/18/14
	<b>Rodent Breeding Colonies</b>	

### **I. Background and Purpose**

The UCSD policy is adopted from the U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training. Federal Regulations and The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals require appropriate management and housing for breeding.

### **II. Who Should Read This Policy**

All investigators and ACP personnel who run breeding colonies or participate in the activities of a breeding colony.

### **III. Definitions**

N/A

### **IV. Policy**

1. Breeding of laboratory animals may not be performed except as approved in an animal use protocol.
2. Individuals participating in breeding programs must attend the ACP Breeding Colony training class.
3. If the breeding colony is located outside of the ACP-managed vivarium, the PI must obtain IACUC approval for a Satellite Facility and fulfill all obligations as detailed in IACUC Policy on Satellite Facilities.
4. The PI is responsible for weaning on time and preventing overcrowding and multiple litters.
5. The PI is responsible for recording date of birth on each cage card within 3 days of birth.
6. Labs must keep records of all the animals born in the colony and the number of animals born must be reported monthly at <https://iacuc.ucsd.edu/OnlineForms/MainMenu.aspx>. Reports must be submitted even if the number of animals born is "0".
7. Toe clipping (removal of the first bone of certain toes corresponding to a predetermined numbering code) as a method of identification may only be used in an approved protocol

with justification of why no other methods are feasible. Toe-clipping is limited to rodents 7 days old or less and should be limited to one digit per extremity. Aseptic practices should be followed (The Guide, page 75).

8. For mouse breeding colonies, the following applies:

With an Animal Use Protocol that includes approval for a Breeding Colony, the following husbandry practices may be selected by investigators housing animals in a standard mouse shoebox cage (~75 square inches).

Breeding adult mice	Maximum wean date of litter	Comments
Two adults	21 days	
One female (male removed)	28 days	If a 2 <sup>nd</sup> litter is born, the 1 <sup>st</sup> litter must be weaned within 2 days of birth.
Multiple females, one male	21 days	The number of adults must be reduced to 2 within 7 days of birth of a 1 <sup>st</sup> litter; birth of a 2 <sup>nd</sup> litter requires separation of litters within 2 days of birth.

Exceptions to these husbandry practices (e.g., use of non-standard size caging, altered wean dates, etc.) must be described in the Animal Use Protocol and will be considered for approval by the IACUC on a case-by-case basis. A scientific justification for the exception must be provided.

**Note:** Although pups with a single dam may be weaned as late as 28 days, tail clipping after 21 days of age requires anesthesia.

9. For rat breeding colonies, you can house one adult female with a litter weaned within 21 days unless approved by the IACUC.
10. For species other than mice and rats, the breeding scheme must comply with the UCSD Housing Requirements for Laboratory Animals:  
<http://iacuc.ucsd.edu/policies/CageSizes.pdf>

## V. Related Documents

The Guide to the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals	<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf">http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf</a>
Identification Policy	<a href="http://blink.ucsd.edu/files/sponsor-tab/iacuc/Policy%2036%20Identification.pdf">http://blink.ucsd.edu/files/sponsor-tab/iacuc/Policy%2036%20Identification.pdf</a>
Housing Requirements for Laboratory Animals	<a href="http://iacuc.ucsd.edu/policies/CageSizes.pdf">http://iacuc.ucsd.edu/policies/CageSizes.pdf</a>

## **VI. Additional information**

**Nutrition:** Nutritional needs will be provided for as noted in the Animal Care Program Standard Operating Procedures for each individual species.

**Veterinary Care:** Veterinary care will be provided for all animal species. Details are supplied in the Animal Care Program Standard Operating Procedures for each individual species.

**Genotyping of Rodents:** The generation of transgenic rodents commonly requires collection of tissue samples for genetic analysis. Tail tip excision, ear punch, peripheral blood collection or analyses of saliva are acceptable methods of tissue collection provided the guidelines below are followed. The IACUC requires that anesthesia must be administered to rodents when the sampling method is associated with more than momentary pain or distress.

**Ear Punching:** Ear punching is commonly used as an identification method in rodents. It is performed using an instrument that removes a small (0.5-1 mm) circular section of tissue from the ear pinna. Multiple samples can be collected from one or both ears. Collection of the small tissue samples produced during ear punching may generate enough tissue (DNA) to allow analysis by PCR. Anesthesia is not required when performing ear punches on rodents.

**Peripheral Blood Collection:** Peripheral blood can provide tissue for genetic analysis. For more information or training in blood collection methods from mice, please contact the Training Coordinator at 822-5686.

**Saliva Analysis:** Genetic analysis of oral epithelial cells collected in saliva from mice has been described and offers an alternative and noninvasive method of genetic analysis in the mouse. This method involves collecting a saliva sample from weanling rodents by oral wash using a plastic pipette tip followed by nested PCR analysis.

### **Tail Tip Excision**

**In pre-weanling rodents:** Anesthesia is not required for rodents < 21 days of age if less than 5 mm of the tail is excised. Anesthesia is required for rodents < 21 days for excision of more than 5 mm or if repeated excisions of tail are required.

**In adult rodents:** Anesthesia is required for rodents that undergo tail tip excision at > 21 days of age.

**Hemostasis:** It is important that complete hemostasis be achieved when performing tail tip excisions, for example by the use of cautery agents such as silver nitrate. The use of a heated scalpel blade is a recommended technique because it accomplishes both amputation and cautery. The scalpel blade can be heated easily in a glass bead sterilizer.

### **Acceptable Methods of Identification of Rodents:**

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**Micro-Tattooing:** A permanent mark, which is easily readable, can now be achieved with the use of micro-tattooing forceps on rodents. It is humane, rapid, easy to apply, and allows for an almost infinite amount of ID numbers. Requires anesthesia and training.

**Microchip:** Injection of small microchip subcutaneously between the scapulae and read with a transponder. This method is easy, safe, reliable, and the microchips are sometimes reusable after sterilization.

**Ear-tagging:** With ear tagging, a metal tag with an ID # is attached to one ear of the rodent. Due to the size of the tag and the rate at which the ear develops, this is routinely performed on weaned animals. However, disadvantages are that tags are burdensome to the animal and can fall out.

### **Acceptable only with scientific justification:**

#### **Toe clipping:**

Toe clipping (removal of the first bone of certain toes corresponding to a predetermined numbering code) as a method of identification should be used only when no other individual identification method is feasible.

Because toe-clipping can alter the gait or weight-bearing ability of a rodent's rear limbs, the *Guide* limits its use to justified instances. According to the 8th edition (NRC 2011), toe-clipping "should be used only when no other individual identification method is feasible." The IACUC has adopted the following policy in accordance with these guidelines:

Investigators considering using toe-clipping as a means of rodent identification must first show that they have considered alternative methods of identification.

The investigator must provide the IACUC with a justification of why toe-clipping is necessary for identification of rodents, including a discussion of why alternative methods are unsatisfactory.

Toe-clipping is limited to rodents 7 days old or less and should be limited to one digit per extremity.