

Medical Care and Records for USDA Regulated Non-rodent Mammals Following Anesthesia and/or Surgery

Typical Species Covered: rabbits, dogs, cats, nonhuman primates, pigs, sheep, goats.

It is the primary responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that appropriate post-anesthetic/post-surgical monitoring is performed and that animal records are maintained for three years after the completion of the protocol.

Call a laboratory animal veterinarian if there are problems with recovery.

Blank post-anesthetic and post-surgical record pages are available from RARC and on the web at <http://www.rarc.wisc.edu>

NOTE: Intubated animals must be monitored continuously until 5 minutes after endotracheal tube extubation (respiratory complications are most likely to occur during the first 5 minutes after extubation). Endotracheal tubes should be removed when the animal exhibits a gag reflex or is observed to swallow, NOT EARLIER.

All anesthetized animals should be examined and the findings recorded according to the following schedule: **

A. Animal unconscious or semiconscious.

1. Examine and record findings at least every 15 minutes.
2. Check heart and respiration rates, color, and response to toe pinch
3. Check condition of the surgical site if possible.
4. Check body temperature; if abnormal take appropriate steps to correct
5. Turn the animal from side to side every 30 minutes if possible during recovery
6. Assess hydration and provide fluids as necessary.
7. Assess animal behavior.
8. Consider use of analgesic medication. Record time and dosage provided.

B. Animal can stand and move, but not eating and drinking normally.

1. Examine twice daily
2. Check heart and respiration rates and color
3. Check condition of the surgical site.
4. Check body temp; if abnormal take appropriate steps to correct
5. Assess hydration and provide fluids as necessary.
6. Assess animal behavior.
7. Consider use of analgesic medication. Record time and dosage provided.

C. Animal active, alert, eating and drinking normally

1. Examine daily for a minimum of 5 days if an invasive procedure was done (3 days for a non-invasive procedure such as imaging)

2. Maintain a record of surgical site care until the sutures or skin clips are removed (sutures should be removed within 10-14 days of surgery).

D. Animal normal; skin sutures removed.

1. Specific post-surgical care and record are no longer required.

** Please note that some of the parameters required for monitoring are not feasible in some species. Please contact a laboratory animal veterinarian for guidance if you have a question.