Denver | Anschutz

**IACUC**
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

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| **Subject:** | **Anesthesia, Surgery, and Analgesic Post-Procedure Records for Laboratory Rodents** |
| Source | Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) |
| Effective Date | 07/13/2026 |
| Replaces: | 04/11/2022 |
| Applies to: | Personnel involved in Research or Teaching involving animals. |
| Reference: | Animal Welfare Act; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals. Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals |

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) provides oversight of the institution's animal care and use program, ensuring compliance with federally mandated regulations, ethical standards, and institutional policies governing the humane use of animals in research and teaching at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz. The IACUC evaluates and reviews all activities related to the care and use of animals and determines if the proposed activities are in accordance with regulations.

## Policy Statement

Investigators are responsible for maintaining accurate records of sedation, anesthesia (with or without surgery), and surgery for survival and terminal procedures. Records for survival procedures should also address postoperative care, including analgesic administration. These records serve as documentation that the procedures were conducted humanely. These records should be established at the time of the procedure necessitating anesthesia to ensure they contain enough detail for readers to understand what actions were taken with the animal. These records should specify what procedures were performed, when they occurred, who conducted them, and include documentation of any anesthetic/analgesic administration in accordance with the IACUC Animal Protocol. This policy covers the time period during the use of anesthetic and/or analgesic drugs as administered appropriately for the procedure performed. These records should be kept until euthanasia of the animal or for the length of the 3-year IACUC approval period (whichever is longer).

## Procedures/Resources

- Records should specifically include:
  - Date of procedure, IACUC protocol number, animal/cohort identification, and surgeon name(s)
  - Brief description of the procedure
  - All drugs administered, including dose, time (if recording as one group, first and last animal), and route of administration
  - Time of anesthetic induction and recovery (if recording as one group, first and last animal)
  - Any abnormalities or changes from routine procedure
  - Confirmation of post-procedural analgesics administered including dose, time and route given
  - Initials of the person administering drugs and making observations
- Records shall be organized and readily available to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, veterinary staff, and representatives of accrediting organizations, when requested. The IACUC will routinely review these records during semiannual inspections and/or Post Approval Monitoring (PAM) sessions.
- If you are using USDA-covered rodents, such as chinchillas, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, or other covered rodent species, please contact a member of the veterinary staff for direction on appropriate surgical/procedural monitoring records.
- Rodent anesthetic record templates are provided on the Resources page of the IACUC's website in MS Word format. The templates can be used or modified for individual investigator use. Using a provided form is not required, but maintaining records is required.

**Exemption**

- Documentation is not required when a gas anesthetic is used for restraint for a procedure that demonstrates momentary pain or is considered non-painful and which takes less than 5 minutes of anesthetic administration. Records for post-procedural analgesics may still be required, i.e., tail snipping after 21 days.
- Records are not required when anesthetics are used to perform euthanasia or lead to euthanasia within 5 minutes of the onset of anesthesia. Examples: anesthetics administered for tissue harvest, pericardial perfusion, or immediately prior to a secondary physical method of euthanasia.

**Anesthetic Recovery**

- Rodents must be monitored until fully recovered from anesthesia. Recovery from anesthesia is indicated by the ability to right themselves when laid on their side, maintain a sternal body position, and demonstrate spontaneous movement in response to environmental stimulation such as cage manipulation. Animals should be monitored during anesthetic recovery at least every 5-10 minutes. Frequency may depend on the procedure and the animal's health condition.
    - If you need to step away from a recovering animal (maximum of 10 minutes), a note with name, date, time, and contact phone number should be left with the animal(s).

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In accordance with regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy will result in a review by the IACUC. Depending on the severity of the violation, you will be required to complete additional training, and your privileges to conduct animal research at CU Denver | Anschutz may be suspended or completely revoked.

If your research privileges are suspended, your funding agency (e.g., NIH) and relevant regulatory agencies (e.g., USDA) will be informed about your violation of federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification will have a direct impact on your ongoing funding for animal-related research. Ensure you adhere to the established guidelines to avoid these consequences