It is the responsibility of the Georgia State University (GSU) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) to ensure judicious and humane use of animals used in its teaching and research programs that is consistent with federal requirements.*

**Guideline on Medical, Surgical and Research Records**

Animal medical, surgical, and research records are a key element of a program of adequate veterinary care as it relates to the animal care and use program. The animal medical, surgical, and research record keeping system delineated herein was developed in congruence with the guidance provided by the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine (ACLAM Position Statement on Medical Records Content and Scope (as updated in 2020), https://www.aclam.org/about/position-statements).

**Medical Records:** Regarding the development of spontaneous disease in all species, excluding non-human primates, (e.g. disease other than experimentally induced disease such as fight wounds, spontaneous tumors, dental problems, etc.) as well as adverse effects of experimental induced diseases (i.e., ulcerated tumor) the relevant animal observations, treatments, case notes, and disease outcome (be it disease resolution or euthanasia) are recorded in the electronic Animal Health Check form which includes the medical record. The Animal Health Check medical record is located on the DAR Portal website at [https://dar.gsu.edu](https://dar.gsu.edu). The website requires a valid GSU email and password. Should an animal be found to be in need of immediate medical attention (whether or not the disease condition was spontaneous or experimentally induced) and, if the DAR staff is unable to reach a member of the research laboratory, the University Veterinarian or Clinical Veterinarian is authorized to act on behalf of the animal (treatment or euthanasia). Otherwise, the DAR veterinary staff makes decisions regarding treatment or euthanasia in consultation with the research lab. Should the researcher observe an animal health issue, they can submit a health observation request to the DAR Portal website as well. However, most researchers notify DAR of an animal needing medical attention by way of email, phone call, or text message. The DAR veterinary staff contact information is located at the exit doors of each animal facility. The veterinary staff contact information is as follows: Animal Healthcare Technicians (office: 404-413-3594; mobile:404-709-9910 or 404-908-4933 or 404-493-1233; e-mail: cbillinglsey2@gsu.edu, jscott72@gsu.edu or kbryant39@gsu.edu) or the veterinarian (Mike Hart: office: 404-413-3553; mobile: 404-391-
Should the laboratory animal technician or research staff personnel observe an animal health issue, they should place a red sticker on the appropriate cage card with the date the health issues was observed (red stickers are located in the 3-ring binder located in the respective animal room), and complete an Animal Health Check form found at the DAR Portal website describing the observation. In the event of an emergency, the laboratory animal technician staff or researcher should contact the above individuals using their mobile phones. Once the health case has been submitted, the DAR Animal Health Care Technician (veterinary assistant) will assess the animal and create a treatment plan. Once the case is resolved, a check mark is placed on the red sticker; concomitantly, the case is moved from “active” to “resolved” in the electronic medical record system.

Regarding medical records for the nonhuman primates, the records are also electronic but maintained on the GSU “SharePoint” website rather than the DAR Portal system. The account for the medical records is password protected. The DAR veterinary staff are the only people which have access to the nonhuman primate records. All medical and surgical procedures conducted on the nonhuman primates (e.g., physical examination, blood collections, laceration repair, etc) are conducted by the GSU veterinarians. Please note that all research procedures conducted on the nonhuman primates are noninvasive. The DAR husbandry staff and research staff report animal health issues to the veterinarians via email, phone call, or text message. The veterinary staff and DAR husbandry staff share responsibility for “cage side” notations (e.g., to document observations of animals under medical care, the administration of medications, and the like).

A Laboratory Animal Care Record (LACR) (a paper form of the medical record) will be associated with each IACUC protocol represented in the animal housing room. The LACR is available for the research staff to record any relevant research related observations, weights, treatments, etc. which the veterinary staff will need to observe. This record is maintained in the 3-ring binder located in the respective animal room. Blank copies of the LACRs are found in the 3-ring binder and are also found online (https://ursa.research.gsu.edu/document/laboratory-animal-care-record/?wpdmdl=653).

**Surgical Records:** Notations related to the conduct of survival surgical procedures must be recorded on the “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents).” Regarding non-survival surgical procedures, should the procedure be an acute non-survival surgical procedure (the animal is euthanized within 15 minutes of being anesthetized), the completion of a an “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents)” is not required. However, should the duration of anesthesia last longer than 15 minutes, one is required to complete this record for non-survival surgeries as well. An example of an acute non-survival surgical procedure for which the duration of anesthesia is typically less than 15 minutes is a rodent transcardial perfusion. The completed record is to be maintained in the 3-ring binder located in the respective animal room. Blank copies of the “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents)” are found in the 3-ring binder and are also found online (https://ursa.research.gsu.edu/document/surgical-record/?wpdmdl=674). This record may
reflect the surgery of a single or multiple animals on a given day. In addition to completing the “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents)”, the surgeon places a green sticker on the cage card that indicates the date animal(s) in the cage had surgery. One can then associate this cage with the requisite “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents).” The DAR husbandry staff will perform 3 days of post-operative checks. The checks are documented on the “Animal Surgical and Anesthesia Record (Rodents).”

**Research Records:** Notations related to the disease that is experimentally induced or experimental procedures that are conducted on animals do not necessarily need to be maintained in the medical record. Rather, it is typically appropriate for this information to be retained within a research record so long as this information is readily available for review by the veterinary staff, as well as for appropriate internal (e.g., IACUC) or external (e.g., USDA, PHS, AAALAC) oversight entities. If research data pertaining to experimentally induced disease or animal procedures conducted cannot be readily retrieved from a researcher’s notebook or computerized database, then this research data should be included within the medical record (Laboratory Animal Care Record) located in the animal housing room. Examples of research data which must be documented includes the following:

1. Animal or group identification and the date of the procedure
2. Date and type of procedure performed (blood collection, euthanasia, etc)
3. Substances administered (anesthetic, analgesics, test substances, etc), including dose and route
4. Monitoring for animal pain and distress and humane endpoints consistent with the parameters approved in the IACUC protocol
5. All entries in the record should be dated and indicate the originator of the entry (e.g., initials, signature/electronic signature) and be legible to someone other than the writer.
6. Regarding the administration of infectious agents in animals, DAR will provide cage labels for the researcher to note the name of the infectious agent and the date it was administered to the animal.
7. Regarding the administration of medicated/special feed or medicated water, DAR will provide “special cage cards” which contain a place to record the substance which has been added to the water or which clarifies the medicated/special feed. The “special cage card” will include a place for the date start and stop dates as well as a place for water bottle changes.
8. Regarding breeding rodents, DAR will provide cage cards which contain places to record relevant breeding information. DAR will also provide “special cage cards” which will capture the bred date, expectant date, and weaning date.
9. Regarding the administration of tumor cell lines, DAR will provide “special cage cards” for the researcher to note the date of injection and location of injection (on the animals).
10. Regarding animals receiving chemical hazards, a copy of the Chemical Safety Subcommittee (CSS) Approval Memo is placed on the outside of the animal room door when the chemical hazard is in active use in the animal room. This memo stipulates the safety measures to be followed pertaining to the chemical hazard to include stipulating how long the chemical hazard
is given to be present in the cage after the cessation of its administration. In addition, DAR management provides the researcher chemical hazard animal cage labels. These labels identify the chemical hazard, the start and stop dates of administration, and the route of administration. The PPE utilized when working with these animals or their cages is discarded in a conspicuously labeled chemical hazard waste bin located in the animal room. At the conclusion of the administration of the chemical hazard for a given cage, the DAR staff will allow the additional time specified by the CSS Approval Memo (e.g. typically 72 hours) for the chemical hazard to be considered no longer present in the cage. At this time, DAR staff will change the cage at which time the new cage is no longer considered to contain the chemical hazard. After the last cage marked with the chemical hazard sticker is removed from the animal room, the DAR staff will remove the CSS Approval Memo from the animal room door. When the soiled bedding is removed from the cages it is done so utilizing a HEPA filtered dump station in the dirty cage wash facility and the soiled bedding is placed in a chemical hazard waste bin. The chemical hazard waste bins are lined with a yellow plastic bag. The yellow bags containing the soiled bedding and those containing the soiled PPE are ultimately channeled for disposal via incineration.

11. Regarding animals undergoing total body irradiation, DAR will provide cage “special cage cards” for the researcher to note the date of the total body irradiation.

12. Regarding animals undergoing food or water restriction, DAR will provide “special cage cards” for the researcher to note the date and time the restriction commenced and will terminate.

Pertinent Regulations*

U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training
Public Health Service Policy
Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals
Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and AWA Regulations

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