

Subject: Major and Multiple Surgeries

Source: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
Effective Date: 07/10/23
Replaces: 03/09/20
Applies to: Personnel involved in research or teaching studies involving animals
Reference: Animal Welfare Act; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals; Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals



Introduction

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) maintains oversight review for federally mandated rules and regulations with regard to animal research, ethics, misconduct and biomedical research for the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus (CU Denver | Anschutz).

Policy Statement

This policy is intended to provide a definition of major surgery and information on multiple surgery and to establish procedures to be followed.

Major Surgery:

- Whether a procedure is major or minor will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and determined by the veterinarian and IACUC.
- In general, major surgery penetrates and exposes a body cavity, or produces significant impairment of physiological function.

Multiple Surgeries:

- Multiple survival surgical procedures on a single animal are discouraged but may be approved by the IACUC if scientifically justified by the investigator.
- Some procedures characterized as minor may induce substantial postprocedural pain or impairment and should similarly be scientifically justified if performed more than once in a single animal.
- It is preferable to use more animals, if possible, to reduce the amount of pain/distress individual animals may experience. Scientific justification for multiple surgeries is required by the Animal Welfare Act.
- Multiple major survival surgeries can be justified if they are (1) included in and essential components of a single research project or protocol, (2) scientifically justified by the investigator, or (3) necessary for clinical reasons.
- Conservation of scarce animal resources may justify the conduct of multiple major surgeries on a single animal, but the application of such a practice on a single animal used in separate protocols is discouraged.
- Cost saving alone is not an adequate reason for performing multiple major survival surgeries.
- Each animal use protocol proposing the use of multiple survival surgeries will be considered and reviewed by the IACUC on a case by case basis.

Per regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy may result in notification of your funding agency (e.g. NIH) and regulatory agencies (e.g. USDA) that your research has violated federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification may affect continuous funding of your animal-related research. Further, depending on the violation, you may be required to take additional training and/or your privilege to conduct animal research at CU Denver | Anschutz might be temporarily suspended or even completely revoked.