

**University of Notre Dame Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
Program of Veterinary Care: Reporting Sick Rodents and Follow-up Care**

Purpose

The Regulations of the Animal Welfare Act and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals include provisions that require proper veterinary care be provided to sick animals used in teaching, testing, or research. In that regard, this document describes standards and procedures for reporting sick or dead animals to the veterinary staff.

Procedure

1. All sick, injured or abnormal (including behavior) animals housed in FLSC/RCH should be reported to the veterinary team. This is done by placing a yellow **Veterinary Care Card** in front of the animal's cage card. A Pink tab will alert the veterinary technicians and the Attending Veterinarian (AV) of animals requiring veterinary observation during weekly rounds. For animals requiring immediate attention, the AV will be notified by phone or e-mail.
2. On weekends, attempts to contact the AV (Dr. Satish Adusumilli) should first be made by phone 631-5393 (office) or (860)333-4670 (cell). If unsuccessful, Dr. Adusumilli can be contacted by email: adusumilli.1@nd.edu. If Dr. Adusumilli is out of town, Dr. Chris Payton should be contacted by phone (574)261-7452 (cell) or (574)234-3098 (clinic). Emergency numbers can be accessed in RCH and FLSC offices.
3. It is the responsibility of husbandry staff to make the initial report of rodent illness or injury using the Veterinary Care Cards. A member of the animal facility staff will conduct an initial evaluation of the animal. The card will be filled out with Animal ID (if applicable), Clinical Signs, Date and Initials of reporting staff member. Once filled out, a pink tab will be affixed to the left side of the card and the **Veterinary Care Card** put over the animal cage card to signal that a new case has been opened and requires veterinary attention.
4. The veterinary staff in consultation with the AV will record the diagnosis and assigned treatment on the Veterinary Care Card and will replace the pink tab with a color coded tab to notify staff of illness/injury category and place stickers on the Veterinary Care Card to record treatment schedules and observations required. The Veterinary Care Card is then placed behind the animal's cage card with one of the coded tabs visible.

Purple: Prolapse – Used for any type of prolapse (uterine, penile, rectal, etc.) In the case of rectal prolapse follow the Standard Operating Procedure for Mice with Rectal Prolapse.

Yellow: Skin problems – Used for chronic skin conditions and ulcerative dermatitis. In the case of ulcerative dermatitis (common in C57BL/6 strains), follow Standard Operating Procedure for Managing Rodent Ulcerative Dermatitis.

Brown: Lesion/Lump – Used for masses, lumps, fight wounds, or non-chronic skin lesions. Follow Standard Operating Procedure for Lesion/Mass Monitoring.

Blue: Watch – These animals will require daily observations for a variety of issues including malocclusion, dehydration, dystocia, post-operative complications, etc.

5. The veterinary staff may perform specific diagnostic procedures or recommend treatment. Some cases however may not require such efforts. Veterinary visits, observations, clinical progress, and recommendations are recorded on the **Veterinary Care Cards**. The veterinary technicians oversee medical treatment of sick animals, although other trained personnel may also be instructed to provide specific treatments which are recorded on the **Veterinary Care Cards**.
6. Reported animals will be monitored until clinical resolution or euthanasia.
7. The Attending Veterinarian will be notified of all **Veterinary Care Cards**. When the case is resolved, the Veterinary Care Cards will be returned to the FLSC main office and will be entered into an electronic file according to the species/strain or Principal Investigator and maintained for 3 years from the time the injury/illness occurred.

8. If an animal is unexpectedly found dead, the **Notification of Animal Death** form will be filled out and maintained in a file located in the FLSC main office. Forms will be maintained in the “Unexpected Death” file for three years beyond the date of the animal’s death. Animal deaths which result in a necropsy being performed will be recorded on the back of the **Notification of Animal Death** and located within that record stream.
9. The veterinary technicians, AV, room technicians or management personnel will contact investigators regarding animals found sick or dead.