

FLSC Standard Operating Procedure for Mice with Rectal Prolapse

Purpose

FLSC/RCH houses mice that are predisposed to rectal prolapse. The prolapse can occur due to strain, age, genetic modification or experimental manipulation. To ensure humane care and prompt veterinary intervention the following procedures will be followed.

Procedure

1. All cages containing mice with rectal prolapse will be identified by animal care staff with a pink Veterinary Care Card tag to alert the Veterinary Staff.
2. The cages containing mice with rectal prolapse will be examined during weekly rounds by the Veterinary Staff.
3. The Veterinary Staff will change the tab from pink to a Purple (Prolapse) Vet Care card tab to identify the cage and alert the room personnel that treatments have been prescribed.
4. All cages with Vet Care Cards will be pulled daily. Observations of the affected animals will be recorded on the Vet Care Card to document dates on which care, as described below, has been provided to any affected mice in the cage.
5. Bedding substrate can be changed from a corncob mixture to Alpha-dri® alone to reduce irritation to exposed mucous membranes. This will be at the discretion of the Veterinary Staff.
6. At least weekly, room technicians should provide the following care:
 - a. Remove any debris adhering to the prolapse by rinsing the area with saline.
 - b. Apply ointment or other lubricant to the prolapse.
 - c. Treatments available include: Triple Antibiotic Ointment, Preparation-H, aqueous lubricant, white petroleum jelly or any combination of the listed products.
 - d. Using a cotton-tipped applicator coated with a lubricant or ointment, gently push the prolapsed tissue back into the rectum. Because some genetically modified strains, such as plasminogen - deficient mice, do not respond to manual reduction, application of lubricant or ointment once weekly may be sufficient.
 - e. Should any bleeding occur or tissues appear necrotic, notify the Veterinary Staff.
7. In cases with extreme rectal prolapse exceeding 6 millimeters, necrosis of the tissues, bleeding, self mutilation, or inability to pass feces, immediately notify Veterinary Staff. These animals will be examined by the Veterinary Staff and either surgically corrected or euthanized after communicating with the Principal Investigator. Exceptions must be justified and approved by the IACUC in an amendment to the animal use protocol.