

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER

POLICY STATEMENT

Animal Pain and/or Distress

Animal pain and distress in laboratory animals should be avoided where possible. Unless otherwise known, procedures deemed to be painful or distressful in humans should be considered to be painful or distressful in animals.

Methods to alleviate or eliminate pain and distress in laboratory animals include pharmacologic and physical. Pharmacologic means include the use of local and systemic analgesics. When possible, a tiered approach (step down) should be used, commencing with more potent, systemic drugs in the immediate post-procedural period followed by a reduction in potency as the recovery progresses. Additionally, pre-emptive analgesics (medications administered prior to the procedural insult) have a proven value in certain situations **and are recommended**. Physical methods include appropriate nursing care (soft blanket, warm environment, fluid therapy, etc) and correct surgical technique.

The Laboratory Animal Facilities veterinary staff maintains a supply of analgesic medications and nursing aids for the minimization of pain and distress. Additionally, an [Analgesic Reference Guide](#) is available for all investigators. Finally, the veterinary staff is available for consults on any analgesic procedures.

The UMMC Animal Activity Protocol form question #16 prompts the investigator to note if Animal Pain and/or Distress is a component of the protocol. Further, the investigator must complete [Appendix J](#) and explain and justify the need for the procedures.

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Updated 7/1/04; 2/17/09

Reviewed: 9/20/11