Policy 369

Stabilization of Animals Before Use

**Responsible Official:** Research Administration

**Administering Division/Department:** IACUC / Research Compliance and Regulatory Affairs

**Effective Date:** 07/28/2005

**Last Revision Date:** 08/17/2022

369.1 Purpose
Newly received animals should be given a period for physiologic, behavioral, and nutritional acclimation before their use, regardless of whether the animals are quarantined. Healthy, well-stabilized animals provide reliable and repeatable data.

369.2 Definitions of Key Terms Specific to this Policy

369.2.1 Emory University animal facility - Includes animal facilities located in buildings at Emory University, Emory National Primate Research Center Main Station, Emory National Primate Research Center Field Station, and Wesley Woods.

369.2.2 Stabilization - The interval of time permitting the restoration of homeostasis and normal behavioral and/or physiologic function following a disruptive event or stressful experience and, where applicable, also allowing for subsequent adaptation to a new environment.

369.2.3 Approved Vendor - Please contact the Division of Animal Resources or Emory National Primate Research Center for information regarding ordering animals from the Approved Vendors list.

369.3 Applicability
This policy applies to all research, teaching, or testing animal activities that fall under the Emory University IACUC’s jurisdiction.

369.4 Procedure
The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals\(^1\) states: “The researcher, in conjunction with the IACUC and veterinary staff, shall evaluate whether additional time for stabilization would be necessary and appropriate during the review of the protocol. The length of time for acclimation will depend on the type and duration of animal transportation, the species, and the intended use of the animals.”

Following receipt of animals from an approved vendor to an Emory University animal facility, animals should be maintained in their home cages/pens for at least 72 hours prior to use in teaching or research activities to allow for a period of initial physiological, psychological, and nutritional stabilization. Depending on the nature of the research, periods of acclimation of up to 4 weeks may be necessary\(^2\). Animals acquired as breeding stock may be organized into breeding groups upon arrival. Those arriving from unapproved vendors or other institutions must go through a period of quarantine. There is no need for additional stabilization following the quarantine period. Stabilization of animals under the terms of this policy is not required when transporting animals between buildings on the Emory University campus.
While a 72-hour acclimation period may be appropriate in many circumstances, investigators are advised to know and understand the stability and resiliency of their animal model system(s) to the stress of transportation and take this into consideration in the preparation, conduct, and publication of experiments.

Exemptions from this policy to eliminate or shorten the stabilization period may be allowable in certain circumstances. One example of this exemption would be instances where animals are received and euthanized for the purpose of tissue collection all in one day. This is allowable with written, or email notification addressed to one of the animal facility veterinarians and/or the IACUC office.

369.5 Sources

Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarification of Policy</td>
<td>Office of Research Compliance and Regulatory Affairs - IACUC</td>
<td>404-712-0734</td>
<td><a href="mailto:iacuc@emory.edu">iacuc@emory.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Revision History: 11/05/2014; 06/19/2019