

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
SOUTH TEXAS VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
7400 Merton Minter Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas 78284

RESEARCH SERVICE
MEMORANDUM NO. 06-5

May 11, 2006

ANIMAL CARE AND USE PROGRAM

Rodent Disease Control Program

1. PURPOSE: To provide policy and procedures for the rodent disease control program within the Veterinary Medical Unit (VMU).
2. POLICY: A program to control significant rodent diseases in rats and mice housed in the VMU has been implemented in cooperation with the Department of Laboratory Animal Resources at the UTHSC. The goals of the program are to control the following diseases:
 - Mice: Mouse Hepatitis Virus (MHV), Sendai Virus, Murine Respiratory Mycoplasmosis (MRM), internal parasites (nematodes, cestodes), external parasites (lice, mites) and salmonellosis, and heliocobacter (where warranted)
 - Rats: Sialodacryoadenitis Virus (RCV/SDA), Sendai Virus, Murine Respiratory Mycoplasmosis, internal parasites (nematodes, cestodes), external parasites (lice, mites), and salmonellosis
3. PROCEDURES: The Department of Laboratory Animal Resources will regularly monitor the health status of mice and rats produced by the various commercial suppliers. This information will be used to maintain an approved vendor list from which rodents housed in the VMU are to be purchased. Arrangements to obtain animals from non-approved sources can only be made after consultation with the Veterinary Medical Officer or VMU supervisor. Quarantine of such animals will be accomplished by UTHSCSA Lab Animal Resources. The cooperation of investigative personnel is essential to the success of this disease control program.
 - a. All Rodents:
 - (1) All rodents arriving at the VMU must be shipped in filtered boxes. (Nude mice will continue to be shipped in germ-free drums.)
 - (2) Newly-arrived rodents must be quarantined at least 72 hours before any procedures may be performed on them.
 - (3) When possible, perform experimental manipulations on rodents in procedure rooms available in the VMU rather than transporting animals to the laboratory.
 - (4) Keep filter tops on rodent cages when transporting cages from the housing room to the procedure room or lab. Also while working with the rodents, the filter top should be removed from only ONE cage at a time under a laminar flow hood.
 - (5) Wipe gloved hands with Clidox-S (1:5:1) between handling of animals of each cage.
 - (6) Wipe work area with Clidox-S followed by 70% isopropyl alcohol.

(7) All floors should be considered contaminated. Do not put any caging or accessories on the floor. Any rodent coming in contact with the floor must be terminated. Do not return it to its cage.

(8) Where possible, sentinel rodents will be housed in each room. Once a month representative rats and mice from these rooms will be tested for any exposure to targeted diseases and necropsied. Results of screenings will be maintained in the VMU office.

b. Mice: Mice arriving from approved suppliers free of targeted diseases will be housed in R213. Mice removed from that room and taken to laboratories or any area outside of the VMU must NOT be returned to R213. All mice will be housed in microisolator filter top cages. Special procedure areas will be assigned by the VMU supervisor to accommodate non-conventional housing needs (isolators, breeding colonies, etc.).

c. Rats: Rats arriving from approved suppliers will be housed in U219 in microisolator units.

d. Questions may be directed to the Veterinary Medical Consultant (567-6166) or the VMU supervisor (X14687).

4. RESCISSION: Research Service Memorandum 05-5, September 23, 2005.



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DISTRIBUTION: Investigators and staff using animals