

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
South Texas Veterans Health Care System  
7400 Merton Minter Boulevard  
San Antonio, Texas 78284

RESEARCH SERVICE  
MEMORANDUM 06-9

September 8, 2006

ANIMAL CARE AND USE PROGRAM

Surgery

1. PURPOSE: To establish policy for surgery within the Veterinary Medical Unit.
2. POLICY: All surgical procedures will be conducted in compliance with approved protocols and established Veterinary Medical Unit procedures.
3. PROCEDURES:
  - a. Monitoring. The Veterinary Medical Consultant ultimately oversees the surgical program. The VMU Supervisor sees to the day to day operation of the surgical facility.
  - b. Presurgical Planning
    - (1) Investigators are required to consult with the VMC prior to submission of a protocol.. surgical plan is reviewed for (1) feasibility of the animal model, (2) surgical expertise required, (3) personnel/training required, (4) surgical facilities, (5) pre-and post-op medications/care
    - (2) After approval by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, the investigator and/or his technician should meet with the VMU supervisor to coordinate all facets of the surgical protocol. All survival and non-survival surgeries on non-rodent mammals are conducted within the VMU surgical suites.
  - c. Training. Investigators and their technicians performing surgery on any animal are required to view video tapes on general surgery and a species-specific surgery tape. (These tapes are available for view through the UTHSC tape library).
  - d. Major and Minor Procedures
    - (1) Major survival surgery - "penetrates and exposes a body cavity or produces substantial impairment of physical or physiologic functions".  
Minor survival surgery - "does not expose a body cavity and causes little or no physiological impairment."  
Non-survival surgery - an animal is euthanized before recovery from anesthesia.
    - (2) All nonsurvival procedures are performed under aseptic techniques.
  - e. Aseptic Procedures
    - (1) Patient - hair clipped, initial scrub in prep room, final prep in OR suite, sterile drapes  
Surgeon- hand scrub, sterile gown, gloves, mask
    - (2) Methods used to sterilize instruments and protective clothing: Steam and ethylene oxide are used to sterilize equipment - protective clothing and drapes. Packs are double wrapped and taped with steam indicator autoclave tape and dated at time of sterilization. AMSCO Chemi-Strip (Steam) strips are inserted in all packs. Routine sterilization cycles run thirty minutes at 250 degrees F. all ethylene oxide

sterilization is performed by Supply Service at the VA Hospital. The autoclave function is checked with a VERIFY (Steris) indicator monthly.

f. Postsurgical Actions. The VMC is responsible for the post operative care of all species. Post surgical rats and mice are returned to clean micro isolator cages placed on circulating heated water blankets and observed until fully recovered. Analgesics are administered as required. The investigator maintains records on postsurgical care.

g. Mammalian Survival Procedures. Rodent survival surgical procedures are performed in in U224, R222 and in investigator labs where dedicated space is available for rodent surgery. VMU animal technicians rotate on a monthly basis through the procedural areas. All technicians and the VMU supervisor have attended the surgical workshop at the Texas Veterinary Medical Center and attended the Internal Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Symposium offered every other year in San Antonio.

h. Nonsurvival Procedures. Nonsurvival surgical procedures are performed in U224 which is dedicated solely to non-survival surgery. The VMU Supervisor is responsible for the management of this facility. Six VMU animal technicians rotate on a monthly basis through procedural areas. All technicians and the VMU supervisor have attended several surgical workshops sponsored by Texas A&M and attend the IVECCS every other year in San Antonio.

i. Multiple Survival Surgeries. In accordance with the Animal Welfare Act, "no animal will be used in more than one major operative procedure from which it is allowed to recover unless:

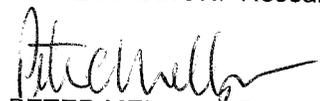
(1) It is justified for scientific reasons in writing by the principal investigator (in the Animal Component of the research proposal) and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

(2) or is required as routine veterinary procedure or to protect the health or well-being of the animal as determined by the attending veterinarian.

4. RESPONSIBILITY: Investigators will be responsible for compliance with animal guidelines.

5. REFERENCES: NIH "Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals; The Animal Welfare Act of 1976 with related rules and regulations as issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.

6. RESCISSION: Research Service Memorandum 03-9, November 21, 2003.

  
PETER MELBY, M.D.  
ACOS for Research and Development

Attachment: Recommended Disinfectants, Sterilants, and Sutures

DISTRIBUTION: VMU, Investigators