

Critical Points For Performing Animal Research

1. ALL RESEARCH, TEACHING, OR TESTING PROJECTS THAT USE VERTEBRATE ANIMALS MUST BE FULLY APPROVED, in advance, by the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).
2. ALL ANIMAL USE AND MANIPULATION MUST CONFORM TO IACUC APPROVED PROTOCOLS. All faculty, staff, or students must be listed on the applicable protocol, and are responsible for reading and following the procedures approved by the IACUC.
3. EMERGENCY VETERINARY MEDICAL CARE/CONSULTATION ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES, including after hours, weekends, and holidays. The veterinary service on call (pager number) for emergencies is 412/958-5923.
4. CONCERNS ABOUT ANIMAL WELFARE AND/OR HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS should be brought to the attention of the Compliance Officer at 412/383-2009, the Attending Veterinarian at 412/648-8950, or the IACUC Chair at 412/647-9614.
5. ALL PERSONNEL INVOLVED WITH ANIMAL PROTOCOLS MUST BE PROPERLY TRAINED OR EXPERIENCED with the proposed procedures for a particular species before initiation of the project. This applies especially to projects involving surgery.
6. STUDY PLANNING RESOURCES FOR ANIMAL BASED STUDIES ARE AVAILABLE through the DLAR. The use of such resources is encouraged, because they likely will assist researchers in producing the most humane and productive research efforts, as well as effective grant preparation and budgeting.
7. CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO "ALTERNATIVE METHODS" when designing projects that use vertebrate animals. The intent of these considerations is to minimize the use of animals, and to reduce to the lowest levels necessary any pain or distress in the animals. Such considerations should include the "three Rs" of Russell and Burch:

Reduction in the number of animals used (implemented by good experimental design and statistical considerations)

Refinement of techniques (familiarity with the techniques to be used through a good literature search or consultation with other investigators/veterinarians)

Replacement of vertebrate animals with alternative research techniques, or using a lower phylogenetic model.

8. PROJECTS INVOLVING KNOWN OR SUSPECTED HAZARDS, SUCH AS HUMAN PATHOGENS, BIOHAZARDS, RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS, RECOMBINANT DNA OR CARCINOGENIC/TOXIC CHEMICALS IN ANIMALS MUST HAVE PRIOR APPROVAL by the appropriate committee or office before

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animals are ordered. Further, a DLAR implementation meeting with the facility supervisor, DLAR veterinarian, and/or applicable safety offices may be mandatory prior to ordering animals.

9. AN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PLAN IS AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES WHO WORK WITH ANIMALS. In addition, employees injured on the job should be aware of University procedures for reporting such injuries/illness. (<http://www.ehs.pitt.edu/biosafety/biosafety.htm>).