

William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital  
VA IACUC Policy #01-13

### **Quarantine and Stabilization**

**Policy:** Quarantine is the separation of newly received animals from those already in the facility until the health of the newly received animals has been evaluated. Effective quarantine minimizes the introduction of disease agents into established colonies.

Quality control by the vendor and knowledge of the history of the animals are acceptable parts of an institution's quarantine protocol. This information may limit the quarantine period for rodents to the time necessary for inspection on arrival; however, all newly received animals should be allowed a period of seven days for physiologic, psychological, and nutritional stabilization prior to their use. This permits animals to adapt to their surroundings, resulting in a more stable physiological and behavioral state.

#### **Responsibilities:**

##### **1. Role of the Animal Research Facility (ARF) Staff**

Newly received rodents purchased from an approved vendor or animals transferred from another facility with serology from direct or sentinel testing within the last 90 days may have a quarantine period limited to the time necessary for inspection upon arrival. In either case, the VMC must approve the health reports before the animals are accepted into the facility. ARF staff will then inspect these animals and if their health appears questionable, the VMC will be notified.

If newly arrived animals appear diseased, they will be isolated in microisolator filter top cages until the vendor or source is contacted. If replacement animals will be shipped, the diseased animals will be immediately euthanized. If no replacement animals will be forthcoming, some of the diseased animals will be sent to UW Research Animal Resources Center (RARC) for diagnostic evaluation. The remaining animals will be maintained in quarantine conditions under filter covers until the results are received and a decision is made by the Veterinary Medical Consultant (VMC) and the ARF Supervisor.

If during normal daily health checks of the animals, an animal appears to have a contagious disease, it will be quarantined in a microisolator filter top cage and evaluated by the VMC.

##### **2. Role of the Investigator**

It is the responsibility of the Investigator to submit an order request to the Animal Research Facility Supervisor who must give written permission before new animals can be ordered. After approval, the Investigator must request Specific Pathogen Free (SPF)

and Helicobacter free animals when ordering animals. The Investigator must also provide a recent (less than 90 days) health report from the vendor or from the facility animals are being transferred from to be delivered with the animal shipment. All newly acquired animals are required to undergo a seven-day stabilization period in their new housing environment before they undergo experimentation

In some circumstances, newly acquired animals may undergo experimentation earlier if approved by the VMC. An example of this may be animals that are euthanized for tissue harvest soon after they arrive in the ARF.

**Questions:** Any questions on this policy should be directed to the A.O. (280-7222).

**Reference:**

- *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, NRC, 2011.
- VHA Handbook 1200.07

**Effective date:** This policy was approved at the IACUC meeting on 10/25/99; Subsequent updates and approvals on 11/14/05; 03/10/08, 3/02/2009, 3/08/2010 1/11/2011, 3/02/2011 1/09/12 & 11/6/13.