



Standard Operating Procedure Rodent Enrichment

1.0 Scope and Application

As promulgated in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, the aim of environmental enrichment is to enhance animal well-being by providing animals with sensory and motor stimulation through structures and resources that facilitate the expression of species-typical behaviors and promote psychological well-being through physical exercise, manipulative activities, and cognitive challenges. In accordance with the *Guide*, enrichment programs should be reviewed by the IACUC, researchers, and veterinarians on a regular basis to ensure animal well-being and consistency with animal use goals. To ensure conformance with Guide standards, the following program is established.

2.0 Summary of Method

- Social grouping for compatible animals is provided unless scientific justification for isolation is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the ACUC. Male mice from differing litters are known to exhibit conspecific aggression and may be housed singly for animal welfare purposes. The rationale for individual housing should be noted on all cages of individually housed rodents unless a specific exemption is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the ACUC.
- Mice, gerbils, hamsters, and voles are provided nesting material unless a specific exemption is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the ACUC.
- Rodents will be provided with hiding structures and/or manipulable resources unless a specific exemption is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the ACUC.
- Cages of animals with environmental enrichment exemptions approved by the ACUC should be noted unless use of global notification is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the ACUC.
- Sanitizable resources are sanitized at least once every 2 weeks. Disposable resources are replaced at the time of cage change or as required.
- Changes to the aforementioned strategies must be approved by the ACUC prior to implementation.

Revision History

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