



Florida State University Animal Care and Use Committee

Policy - Reuse of Research Animals

Reuse of animals is defined as the sequential use of the same animal(s) for unrelated experiments. Federal laws, regulations and policies require application of the three R's (replacement, refinement, reduction) during planning and implementation of animal use in research, training and testing. The method of animal number reduction often leads to consideration of reuse of animals that have undergone one or more experimental procedures. However animal welfare must be considered when considering this choice. Animals which have already been used on a study, especially when the well-being of the animal(s) has been compromised, should not be reused.¹ Examples include, but are not limited to, studies that may result in severe or chronic pain or that cause significant alterations in the animals' ability to maintain normal physiology, or adequately respond to stressors.

Animals may be re-used provided they meet one of the following conditions:

- animals are healthy and previously unused in an experiment,
- animals previously used for breeding and that have undergone no invasive procedures (genotyping is not considered an invasive procedure),
- animals transferred from one protocol to another approved protocol for the purpose of immediate euthanasia by an approved method stated in the protocol,
- animals that have been used for simple experimental procedures but in which no invasive or painful procedures have been performed (e.g. single blood draw or injection),
- with appropriate justification, animals that have undergone an invasive procedure may be reused for training of a non-survival procedure under an approved protocol.

Policy: Protocol-to-protocol transfer of research animals (unless described and approved in existing protocols) as outlined above must be approved in advance by the Attending Veterinarian, the IACUC Chair or a designee of the IACUC Chair. Transfer of animals from a protocol where the animals have not yet been used, are retired breeders or are unwanted offspring from breeding colonies to a research protocol where the IACUC is aware of the planned transfer and has already given its approval are excluded. In no case may animals having multiple survival surgeries or painful procedures, either within one protocol or across protocols (ie, one surgery in one protocol, and the second in a different protocol) be reused without prior review and approval by the IACUC. All transfers must be documented.

Reference:

Fentener van Vlissingen, J.M. The re-use of animals for research – a humane endpoint? In Humane endpoints in animal experiments for biomedical research. Pg 145-147.

Silverman, J. One Animal, Two Protocols – An Appropriate Application of the 3 Rs? (2007). 36(3):13-15.

Silverman, J. Collaborative Studies and Animal Reuse. Lab Animal (2008). 37(2):61-63.

¹ Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition, pp 5: *“Refinement and reduction goals should be balanced on a case-by-case basis. Principal investigators are strongly discouraged from advocating animal reuse as a reduction strategy, and reduction should not be a rationale for reusing an animal or animals that have already undergone experimental procedures especially if the well-being of the animals would be compromised.”*

Approved by the FSU ACUC: January 27, 2014