UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA CRUZ

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Policy on Analgesia in Animals

Date Reviewed: 7/26/18

Assessment of pain and distress in animals is difficult and can be subjective. According to the US Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training, "**unless the contrary is established, it should be considered that procedures that cause pain or distress in humans may also cause similar effects in animals".** This policy has been created to provide guidance on the use of analgesics in surgical procedures

1. Animal welfare regulations require that experimental procedures involving animals avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to the animals. If procedures involve more than momentary or slight pain and discomfort to animals, regulations require the appropriate use of analgesics, unless withholding of such agents is scientifically justified in writing and approved by the IACUC.

2. Any questions regarding behavioral signs indicative of pain in a particular species, the choice of agents, dose range, etc. should be directed to the UCSC veterinarian.

3. Investigators must always provide anesthesia and analgesia when performing surgical procedures, unless exception is appropriately justified and approved by the IACUC.

4. Exceptions to the use of anesthesia or analgesia, if approved by the IACUC, may elevate the protocol to Humane Use Category E, meaning it will include procedures that expose animals to pain or distress without administration of appropriate analgesic medications. Type E procedures are included in the annual report to the USDA, for species covered by the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations.

5. Exemptions to this policy are allowable in situations where analgesics are causing adverse effects in animals, or for procedures where data can be provided that demonstrates a particular surgical procedure in a specific species does not warrant the length of analgesia required in its surgical classification. All exemptions must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC.

6. **Veterinary staff may recommend increased duration or changes in types of drugs or combinations of drugs based on professional judgement, published literature and observation of animals recovering from surgical procedures.**

References:

8th edition of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (NRC, 2011)
US Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training 2015

Turner, P. (2016). ACLAM Position Statement on Pain and Distress in Research Animals. Journal of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science*, 55(6)*