

University of Colorado at Boulder
Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
SOP # 25
Title: Toe Clipping for Identification and Genotyping in Mice

INTRODUCTION

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) maintains oversight review for federally mandated rules and regulations with regard to animal research, ethics, misconduct and biomedical research for the University of Colorado Boulder.

POLICY

This policy is intended to provide information on the requirements of toe clipping and to establish procedures to be followed.

- Toe clipping may only be performed with the approval of the IACUC in your animal protocol.
- Toe clipping as a method of identification of small rodents is considered a potentially painful procedure and is generally discouraged as an identification method, as there are other methods of identification that are available.
- Toe clipping, while rarely required, is a conditionally acceptable procedure.
- The Principal Investigator must adequately justify to the IACUC that no other method of animal identification is practical for the specific study under consideration.
- Suggestions of alternatives to toe clipping include:
 - Ear punching
 - Ear tags
 - Microchips
 - Tattooing (subcutaneous injection or intradermal inoculation).
 - Footpad tattooing (can be performed on P1 – P7 pups).
- If toe clipping is approved by the IACUC in your protocol, the follow restrictions apply:
 - Toe clipping must be performed on neonatal rodents no older than 5 days of age,
 - Toe clipping must be performed under anesthesia. (Approved anesthesia methods for neonatal rodents include adequate brief, generalized or localized, hypothermia exposure.),
 - Toe clipping must be performed using aseptic technique,
 - Toe clipping must be performed using coagulants or other therapy.

Per regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy may result in notification of your funding agency (e.g. NIH) and regulatory agencies (e.g. USDA) that your research has violated federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification may affect continuous funding of your animal-related research. Further, depending on the violation, you may be required to take additional training and/or your privilege to conduct animal research at the University of Colorado Boulder might be temporarily suspended or even completely revoked.