

TO: Principal Investigators Working with Mice

FROM: Jeff Wyatt DVM, MPH, DACLAM  
Attending Veterinarian

RE: Diagnostic Mouse Necropsies (at no charge)

DATE: June 16, 2008

Laboratory mice decompose rapidly after death making a diagnostic necropsy including histopathology noncontributory to a diagnosis. The opportunity cost is too high while waiting for phone calls or e-mails to be made and returned regarding the decision to necropsy. **Beginning July 1**, the veterinary staff will examine all mice (at no charge) that are found dead and necropsy them (at no charge) if they are not too decomposed. Otherwise we will characterize them (e.g. too autolytic to necropsy, desiccated, adult, weanling or nursing pup, cannibalized, poor body condition, incisor malocclusion, feces present, etc...) and place them back in the necropsy cooler for the typical seventy two hour PI pick-up option. We will continue to report all mouse deaths per usual with cage and animal IDs to the lab contact person plus provide the above information on the body condition but will not ask for permission to necropsy nor require a response from you back to us.

If the mouse is necropsied, the principal investigator will receive a pathology report including diagnostic test results (e.g. bacterial culture), gross and histopathologic findings plus veterinary comment on colony health. We have found this diagnostic approach to be very informative for select researchers especially when ruling out infectious disease (e.g. *Pseudomonas sp*) in immunocompromised mice and detecting unanticipated, spontaneous disease (e.g. obstructive bladder stones in hormone treated mice). The veterinary staff will track and report all findings in a database monitoring trends in colony health, morbidity and mortality by building and suite. We may then realize patterns in colony health we are possibly missing and implement preventive measures.

**If you want your dead mouse's carcass for experimental purposes prohibiting a diagnostic necropsy (at no charge), PLEASE SUBMIT A SPECIAL REQUEST TO THE ANIMAL RESOURCE OFFICE indicating which UCAR PROTOCOLS cover mice that you must examine upon death for experimental reasons instead of allowing a diagnostic necropsy. Please also provide contact information including home phone numbers so we may contact you after-hours if you must examine the dead mouse before it decomposes.**

Please e-mail or call me if you have any questions or suggestions.  
([jeff\\_wyatt@urmc.rochester.edu](mailto:jeff_wyatt@urmc.rochester.edu)) - 5-2651.