

# Document Cover Sheet

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# UM PROGRAM

## FOR DAILY ANIMAL HEALTH CHECK -- MAMMALS

According to the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, all animals should be observed daily for signs of illness, injury, or abnormal behavior by a person trained to recognize such signs. Unexpected deaths and signs of illness, distress, or other deviations from normal in animals should be reported promptly to ensure appropriate and timely delivery of veterinary medical care. Adherence to this recommendation is critical to the maintenance of good health for both individual animals and animal colonies.

In compliance with this recommendation, the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA) requires that all vertebrate animals maintained by the University for use in research, testing, or instruction, and their immediate housing environments, be checked **daily** for abnormal and/or deleterious conditions. Descriptions of the animal health and environment checks follow.

**Animal Health Check.** Manipulate enclosures as necessary to observe appearance and behavior of animals. Examples of conditions which may be observed and should be reported include:

- excessive sneezing
- excessive scratching
- hunched posture
- ruffled fur
- lethargy
- separation or different behavior from the group
- dehydration (sunken eyes, loss of skin elasticity)
- hair loss
- skin irritation, lacerations, or ulcers
- bleeding or discharge from orifice
- excessive weight loss/emaciation or weight gain/obesity
- swellings
- head tilt/circling in cage
- lameness
- diarrhea
- vaginal, rectal, or penile prolapse
- red pigment around eyes
- difficulty breathing
- convulsions or seizures

**Environment Check.** Primary (cage) and secondary (room) enclosures should be evaluated for the following:

- unusual odor
- photoperiod abnormalities
- temperature extremes
- inadequate ventilation (stuffy, excessive odor)
- inadequate supply of food or water
- lack of feces or urine
- decreased food or water consumption
- wet or flooded enclosure
- moisture condensation on microisolator enclosure
- broken enclosure
- excessively soiled enclosure

Signs of illness, injury, or other abnormal conditions should be reported immediately to the facility supervisor and, as appropriate, to the Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine (ULAM) veterinary technical staff. The ULAM veterinary staff is charged with the responsibility for delivery of timely veterinary medical care. Deleterious environmental conditions should be resolved as soon as possible by correction of the condition or relocation of the animals.

Daily animal health and environment checks are the responsibility of animal care personnel, and must be recorded on the animal housing room activity log. Failure to perform and record these checks, or failure to report deleterious animal health or environmental conditions for treatment or correction, could result in withdrawal of UCUCA approval to house animals. Similarly, animal use personnel are responsible for observation and evaluation of animal well-being during experimental manipulations, and must report any deleterious animal health or environmental conditions to appropriate animal care or veterinary personnel promptly. Failure to do so could result in withdrawal of UCUCA approval to use animals.

Related Documents:

- U-M Program for the Documentation of Animal Husbandry Activities Utilizing an Animal Housing Room Activity Log