

STONEHILL COLLEGE

Animal Identification Procedures SOP

The intent of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe the various procedures used in identifying rodents for use in basic research. This SOP is intended for personnel trained in handling rodents. These procedures are approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of Stonehill College. Any exemption must be approved by the IACUC prior to its application.

1. Introduction: There are a variety of methods used in breeding and research programs for identifying individual mice or rats.

2. Purpose: To ensure proper technique is used to identify individual animals.

3. Materials:

- Cage card
- Ear punch
- Indelible ink
- Ear tag
- Injectable identification chip
- Ear punch identification
- Tattoo equipment

4. Rodent Identification Procedures:

a. Every cage must have a cage card with the following information:

- Principal Investigator
- IACUC approved protocol Number
- Date of birth
- Sex of animals
- Species
- Strain
- Source of Animal

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b. Ear punch or notch:

- Refer to the ear punch chart as to the appropriate markings for the identification number that has been assigned.
- Restrain the animal according to the methods outlined in “General Rodent Procedures”.
- Once the animal is properly restrained, using the ear punch tool, position the appropriate portion of the ear at the cutting end of the tool.
- Quickly depress the punch tool, cutting a hole or notch in the ear. **Note: Make sure to completely cut through, so that the cut piece of skin is totally removed from the ear.**
- Remove the tool and repeat steps (a) through (d) until the identification number pattern is complete.

c. Indelible Ink: Generally used as a temporary method of identification.

- Use only non-toxic markers.
- Determine the appropriate markings and part of the animal to be used as identification. **Note: Generally the marking will be at the base of the tail.**
- Restrain the animal according to the procedures outlined in “General Rodent Procedures”.
- Once the animal is properly restrained, pick up the marker and place on the appropriate area.
- Mark the animal according to the predetermined pattern.

d. Ear Tag:

- Identify the correct ear tag with the animal’s assigned number on it.
- Prepare the tag and tool according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Restrain the animals according to the procedures outlined in “General Rodent Procedures”.

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- Prepare the ear and apply the ear tag according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

e. Tattoo:

- Determine the appropriate marking (usually letters or numbers) that is to be placed on the animal.
- Decide the area of the animal to be tattooed. **Note: In the case of rodents, the tail is used.**
- Prepare the tattoo equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Restrain the animal according to procedures outlined in "General Rodent Procedures".
- Prepare the area of the tail and apply the tattoo according to the manufacturer's instructions.

f. Injected Identification Chip:

- Identify the corresponding chip for the animal's assigned number.
- Prepare the chip and the injection tool(s) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Restrain the animal according to the procedures outlined in "General Rodent Procedures".
- Inject the chip subcutaneously according to the manufacturer's instructions. **Note: Refer to General Rodent Procedures for proper subcutaneous injection technique.**