

IACUC Policy on the Quarantine and Stabilization of Animals

Definitions

Quarantine: The separation of newly received animals from the population already within the facility, until the health and possibly the microbial status of the newly received animals have been established.

Stabilization: The period required to house newly-received animals with minimal or no experimental intervention until acclimated to the new environment, resulting in a more stable physiological and behavioral state.

Policy:

An effective quarantine minimizes the chance for introduction of pathogens into an established colony. Information from the source on animal quality should be sufficient to enable the Attending Veterinarian to determine the length of quarantine, to define the potential risks to personnel and animals within the colony, and to determine whether therapy is required before animals are released from quarantine.

Rodents might not require quarantine, if data from the source are sufficiently current and complete to define the health status of the incoming animals and if the potential for exposure to pathogens during transit is considered.

However, all newly-received animals at USC should be given a period for physiologic, psychologic, and nutritional stabilization before their use. Such a period allows the animal to recover from shipping stress, adapt to its new surroundings, and become physiologically stable. Adequate acclimation times may vary depending on the animal species, source, type and duration of transportation, and the intended use of the animals.

For rodents, the recommended adaptation is a minimum of 72 hours (3 days) prior to use in non-acute procedures.

For all large animals (including rabbits) undergoing non-acute procedures, the recommended adaptation is 5 days, minimum.

All newly-arrived animals that shall be used in teaching, research, or testing at USC should be provided the minimum acclimation periods described in these guidelines. Failure to allow animals to acclimatize could adversely affect animal health and research data.