

INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE  
Policy #15  
**Survival Surgery**

In concurrence with  
TTUHSC El Paso Assurance #D19-01056  
and Federal Regulations and Guidelines

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to define the types of surgery listed on IACUC protocols, and the procedures and regulations required to complete these surgeries.

**Survival and Non-Survival Surgery.**

If an animal will regain consciousness after a surgery, it is considered a survival surgery. If the animal is euthanized prior to regaining consciousness, it is considered a non-survival surgery.

**Major and Minor Surgery**

Major survival surgery is defined (*Guide*, 8th ed.) as the penetration and exposure of a body cavity, the production of substantial impairment of physical or physiologic functions (such as laparotomy, thoracotomy, craniotomy, joint replacement, and limb amputation), or the extensive dissection or transection of tissue.

Minor survival surgery does not expose a body cavity and causes little or no physical impairment (for example, wound suturing, peripheral-vessel cannulation, certain types of laparoscopy and stereotaxic injections).

Both major and minor procedures require aseptic technique and sterilized instruments as well as appropriate application of anesthesia and analgesia.

**Multiple Major Surgical Procedures (General)**

Multiple major survival surgical procedures on a single animal are discouraged, but may be permitted if scientifically justified by the user and approved by the IACUC.

A. Examples of acceptable justification for multiple surgeries include:

- 1) the presence of related components of a research project;
- 2) the conservation of scarce animal resources; and,
- 3) clinical teaching purposes.

B. The principal investigator (PI) must provide clear documentation of the following items to the IACUC:

- 1) the background literature, which adequately supports the need for multiple procedures and the potential significance of findings gleaned from these surgeries; and,
- 2) the number of major surgeries proposed, which will be the absolute minimum required to obtain the necessary data.

**Major USDA Species Survival Surgery**

Refer to the appropriate USDA covered species survival surgery policy for more information. Contact the IACUC if the species you are working with is not listed.

**Rodent Survival Surgery**

Procedures for rodent survival surgery and euthanasia are discussed in Policy 8 and Policy 9.

### **Multiple Major Surgical Procedures for Frogs**

Survival surgery to harvest oocytes is described in Frog Oocyte Harvest Policy 18.

### **Related policies**

Investigators must comply with all other institutional policies at TTUHSC El Paso and Federal Guidelines. This list includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Policy 8: Rodent Survival Surgery and Euthanasia.

Policy 9: Inhalant Euthanasia.

Policy 18: Frog Oocyte harvest.