



University of Maryland College Park Animal Care and Use Standard

Animal Health Records

Purpose: This standard describes documentation requirements pertaining to animal health.

Background: Health records convey necessary information to everyone involved in an animal's care. Health records should be sufficiently comprehensive to demonstrate the delivery of adequate health care. They should be current and legible.

Methodology

1. Health records must include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - Identity of the animal. Provide a list of animal numbers if a group.
 - Descriptions of any illness, injury, distress, and/or behavioral abnormalities and the resolution of any noted problem. A diagnosis and prognosis should be included when appropriate.
 - Dates, details, and results (if appropriate) of all medically related observations, examinations, tests, and other such procedures.
 - Dates and other details of all treatments, including the name, dose, route, frequency, and duration of treatment with drugs or other medications. (A "check-off" system to record when treatment is given each day is recommended.)
 - Criteria and/or schedule for re-evaluation(s) when appropriate by the facility veterinarian.
 - All entries must be dated.
 - The originator must be indicated by initials or signature.
 - As long as all required information is readily available, records may be kept in any format convenient to the PI or facility veterinarian. For rodents, the Animal Health Report form is an acceptable format to report and document animal health issues.
 - To assist caretakers with the evaluation of rodents, the date of any surgical procedure must be noted on the animal's cage card.
 - Health records may be held by the PI or facility veterinarian or divided between both (if appropriately cross-referenced). An animal's health records must be held for at least 3 years after the expiration of the protocol to which the animal is assigned.
2. Group health records.
 - May be appropriate for animals that are part of a larger cohort wherein the same treatments/procedures are performed for each animal.
3. Individual health records
 - Should be maintained for animals such as horses and USDA-regulated non-rodents when treated individually.



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- Should be maintained for animals undergoing any anesthetic episode (except castrations and dehorning of cattle). For further detail, see the UMD IACUC standard on Anesthetic Procedure Recordkeeping
4. Records of terminal surgical procedures must include, at a minimum, the following information:
- Identity of the animal.
 - Date of the procedure.
 - Type of procedure.
 - Pre and intra-operative medications including the name, dose, and route.

Note: USDA regulated species include all vertebrates except cold blooded species, rats in the genus *Rattus*, mice in the genus *Mus*, birds bred for and used in research, and farm animals used in agricultural production and production-oriented (“food and fiber”) research.

References

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching

American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine statement on medical records