

Clemson University
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

Policy Number: 3.8

Policy Title: Multiple Survival Surgeries on a Single Animal

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on multiple survival surgeries on a single animal.

Section 2: Scope

This policy applies to all vertebrate animals covered under an Animal Use Protocol (AUP).

Section 3: Policy

Major Surgical Procedures

Major surgical procedures are defined as any intervention that penetrates and exposes a body cavity or any procedure that produces permanent impairment of physical or physiological functions. The IACUC or the Attending Veterinarian may consider a procedure major that does not expose a body cavity or induce impairment, based on the nature of the procedure and expected outcomes. Examples include but are not limited to laparotomy, thoracotomy, joint replacement, and limb amputation.

Minor Surgical Procedures

Minor surgical procedures are generally described as procedures that do not expose a body cavity and causes little or no physical impairment. Examples include, but are not limited to: wound suturing, peripheral vessel cannulation, dehorning, or prolapse repair.

Survival Surgery

A surgery is considered survival if the animal will be recovered from anesthesia for any length of time.

Non-Survival Surgery

A surgery is considered non-survival if the animal is not allowed to recover from anesthesia and is euthanized at the conclusion of the procedure.

Multiple Survival Surgeries

Although discouraged, multiple survival surgical procedures may be performed on a single animal if the surgical procedures are scientifically justified, essential to the objectives of a single research protocol, and approved by the IACUC.

Animals that have undergone surgical procedures for routine veterinary care are not automatically excluded from study groups.

Approval of Multiple Survival Surgical Procedures

- The Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC will classify an operative procedure as major or minor. The potential for pain and postoperative complications, the nature of the procedure, the size and location of the incisions, the duration of the procedure, the species, the health status of the animal, and the age of the animal will be considered.
- Multiple minor survival surgical procedures may be approved using the Designated Member (DMR) review process.
- Multiple major surgical procedures must be approved using the Full Committee Review (FCR) process.