Subject: Multiple Survival Surgeries

BACKGROUND

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (the Guide, NRC 2011) states:

- “Surgical procedures in the laboratory setting may be categorized as major or minor.” (p. 30)
- Regardless of classification, multiple surgical procedures on a single animal should be evaluated to determine their impact on the animal’s well-being. Multiple major surgical procedures on a single animal are acceptable only if they are included in and essential components of a single research project or protocol and are scientifically justified by the investigator, or if necessary for clinical reasons. (p. 30)
- “Some procedures characterized as minor may induce substantial post-procedure pain or impairment and should similarly be scientifically justified if performed more than once in a single animal.” (p. 30)

IACUC Policy

Protocols that propose survival surgical procedures whether minor or major must provide justification in the protocol application. Multiple major survival surgeries must satisfy the criteria above taken from the Guide. Cost savings is not an adequate justification for multiple surgeries.

A specific timeline detailing when surgical procedures will be performed must be included in the protocol. Adequate time between procedures should be provided so that the animal can return to pre-surgical homeostasis (return to pre-surgical weight and hydration status, and none to a minimal level of pain).

Supportive care and adequate analgesia must be provided to the animals between procedures.

The IACUC may require periodic reporting from the Principal Investigator to track the outcomes of the multiple survival procedures.