

Title: Recommendations Regarding Toe-Clipping of Amphibians and Reptiles	Effective Date:
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The Oklahoma State University (OSU) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) was established by federal mandate and evaluates all aspects of the institution's animal care and use program. This authority comes from 1) the Animal Welfare Act, and 2) the Health Research Extension Act (Public Health Service Policy). The IACUC is tasked with ensuring the well-being of all animals used in research, testing, or teaching at OSU. The following is the OSU IACUC's position on toe-clipping of amphibians and reptiles.

Recommendations Regarding Toe-Clipping of Amphibians and Reptiles:

The toe-clipping of amphibians and reptiles used in research, testing, or teaching is not prohibited by any of the guides used by the OSU IACUC. Although the scientific literature evaluating the impact of this procedure on the animal is inconsistent, it is the opinion of the IACUC that the removal of digits required for locomotion is likely painful and potentially harmful to an animal's normal behavior. Thus, the committee recommends that toe-clipping of amphibians and reptiles not occur when the technique is used strictly as a means of animal identification. There are instances where the clipping of toes may be necessary from a research standpoint (i.e., the need to obtain a biological sample for analysis). In these cases, the clipping of toes must be scientifically justified. In addition, the smallest possible sample (i.e., one phalange of only one toe) should be collected. If larger or additional samples are needed, additional scientific justification is mandatory. Also, if the clipping of toes is justifiable, analgesia (i.e., topical lidocaine applied by a cotton-tipped applicator to the digit) should be provided to the animal to relieve pain. If no analgesia is provided, this again must be scientifically justified, and likely would require the animals to be classified under pain category E and thus subject the protocol to full committee review (FCR).

IACUC approved references include the current editions of the following:

Anesthesia, analgesia, or sedation to referenced drugs and dosages for the species.

Laboratory Animal Medicine, ACLAM Blue Book Series

Harkness and Wagner's Biology and Medicine of Rabbits and Rodents

Flecknell's Laboratory Animal Anesthesia

Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook

ACLAM's Formulary for Laboratory Animals

Fowler's Zoo and Wildlife Medicine

Lumb and Jones Veterinary Anesthesia and Analgesia

Anesthesia and Analgesia of Laboratory Animals (ACLAM's Blue Book Series)

Flecknell and Waterman-Pearson's Pain Management in Animals

Muir et. al. Handbook of Veterinary Anesthesia

Hagyard Pharmacy mobile formulary

Journal publications (peer reviewed)