

Approved exceptions:

3.) Regarding assurance statement 3, there are IACUC protocols that require the removal of resting surfaces from the primary enclosures of cats. Specifically:

Perching Surfaces: Animals with chronic implants may damage the implants from jumping onto raised surfaces. Also, animals that are recovering from surgery may be less stable and can injure themselves when moving onto/from the perch. The Animal Welfare Act (AWA), *Part 3, subpart A, § 3.6.iv.4*, states that each primary housing enclosure must contain a resting surface, which must be elevated. Depending on the animals' condition the perch may be removed, or modified to prevent the animal from injuring itself. If the perching surface has been removed, or lowered additional cage space will be provided. A comfortable resting surface will be provided if the perch has been removed.

Eight (8) cats were affected by this exception to the AWA in the past year (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021).

In addition to exception for perching surfaces for cats, one (1) approved protocol has an exception from social housing for rabbits for extended periods of time following surgery. Specifically:

Exception to social housing: Single cage housing is needed to avoid interference with surgical site by cage mates. Also, in our experience, it can take several weeks for full recovery after surgery, specifically for an animal to return to normal eating and normal stool passage. It is easier to monitor food/enrichment and water intake and stool/urine output when an animal is single housed. If allowable, we will request an exemption for up to 4 weeks of single housing after surgery, with animals socially paired again as soon as full recovery is achieved (as determined by the veterinarian).

One objective of these studies is to develop novel polymer devices, which are implanted subcutaneously, can continuously release active pharmaceutical agents, and then be easily removed. We have observed that many of these subcutaneous devices are migrating substantially (e.g. mid back to shoulders), making localization for removal difficult. Additionally, some devices have broken in vivo. While this may be due to device design issues, given both device movement and failure, we hypothesize that the interactions between rabbits that occur with social housing (such as playing) may contribute to excessive movement or forces that could lead to device breakage. We would like to test this hypothesis by housing rabbits individually. Device locations will be monitored by gently probing the skin with fingers and looking for visual signs. If we determine that this approach does not improve device movement or breakage, we will return to social housing.

Seventeen (17) rabbits were affected by this exception to the AWA in the past year (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021).