

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO
INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE**

Policy and Guidelines for Post-Anesthetic Monitoring

Animals should not be left unattended during the post-anesthetic or post-surgical period until they have regained consciousness. Qualified individuals should closely monitor them during this time. Monitoring requirements will vary according to species, strain, breed, individual differences, temperature, type of anesthetic used, and the type of procedure performed. At a minimum, the record should indicate the time the animal was examined, the person who examined the animal, any treatments or medications administered, any abnormal findings, and (when applicable) the time of the recovery events, which are all listed on the Post-Anesthetic Recovery Record.

1. Some or all of the following parameters, depending on the species, anesthetic, procedure and recovery time, should be periodically monitored until the animal regains consciousness
 - a. Body temperature
 - b. Heart rate and character
 - c. Respiratory rate and pattern
 - d. Capillary refill time (CRT)
 - e. Jaw-tone
 - f. Response to toe-pinch
 - g. Palpebral response to touching the medial canthus
 - h. Color of mucous membranes
2. Extubation should be performed when the swallowing reflex has returned.
3. Animals should be turned from side to side periodically to help prevent pulmonary hypostatic congestion.
4. Animals should be kept warm to prevent hypothermia, as hypothermia prolongs recovery from anesthesia. Ambient temperature should be adjusted by increasing room temperature (when possible) and using circulating warm water blankets or drapes. The animal should be kept dry and any excreta removed immediately.
5. The state of hydration should be assessed by noting perfusion of mucous membranes, skin turgor, dryness of oral cavity and evidence of voided urine. Parenteral fluids should be provided as necessary. They may be administered intravenously or subcutaneously depending upon clinical status of the animal.
6. Animals should not be left unattended until they are conscious, can maintain sternal recumbency without assistance, and have good control of their head and necks.