

## UCAR Policy on Toe Clipping

Toe-clipping is one of several permanent methods of identification used on mice, rats and birds. It involves the removal of the phalangeal bone from the most distal joint to the tip of certain toes with a sharp instrument, according to a numbering code. The toe-clipping procedure is considered potentially painful and may impair an animal's ability to grip and groom.

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Eighth Edition states "As a method of identification of small rodents, toe-clipping should be used only when no other individual identification method is feasible. It may be the preferred method for neonatal mice up to 7 days of age as it appears to have few adverse effects on behavior and well-being at this age (Castelhano-Carlos et al. 2010; Schaefer et al. 2010), especially if toe clipping and genotyping can be combined. "

The University Committee on Animal Resources (UCAR) recognizes that under certain circumstances, it may be necessary to use toe clipping as a method of identification in mice, rats and birds. In accordance with the Guide, UCAR has established the following toe-clip policy:

1. Strong justification for the toe-clipping procedure must be provided in the protocol and approved by UCAR. The justification should include a discussion of

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