

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee		UNTHSC
Title: Expired Medical Materials at UNTHSC		
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A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with federal regulations, the use of expired medical materials such as euthanasia, anesthesia, and analgesia agents is never acceptable to use past their expiration date in animals, even for terminal procedures. The use of expired medical materials such as drugs, fluids, or sutures in a survival surgical procedure is also not considered to be acceptable veterinary practice and does not constitute adequate veterinary care as required by the regulations promulgated under the Animal Welfare Act. The facility or Principal Investigators must either dispose of all such materials or segregate them in an appropriately labeled, physically separate location from non-expired medical materials.

For acute terminal procedures, with the exception of euthanasia, anesthesia, and analgesia agents, expired medical materials may be used if the manufacturer is able to verify the efficacy of the product beyond the expiration date, or if the investigator is able to document that it does not adversely affect the animal’s wellbeing or compromise the validity of the scientific study. As the attending veterinarian and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) are responsible for ensuring that proposed animal activities avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to the animal, they must maintain control over the use of expired medical materials.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. It is the responsibility for the Principal Investigator (PI) at the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) to follow the procedures set forth within this document.

C. PROCEDURES

- a. For Survival Procedures:
 - i. No expired drugs or materials may be used in survival surgeries. An item stamped with an expiration date of “2023-12” may be used through December 31, 2023. It is outdated January 1, 2024. Dispose of the outdated items appropriately.
 - ii. Investigators are responsible for ensuring that all drugs and medical materials used in their laboratories are within the expiration date. All drug preparations must be labeled with the date of preparation and the earliest expiration date of the component drugs. All expired supplies must be labeled “Expired-Do Not Use” and stored separately from non-expired materials if immediate disposal is not possible.

If the need to use expired medical materials in a survival procedure arises, justification for its use is required in the approved IACUC protocol.

b. For Non-Survival Procedures:

i. With the exception of controlled substances and emergency, anesthetic, analgesic, or euthanasia drugs, expired medical materials may be used in terminal procedures, including non-survival surgeries, provided:

1. The use of expired medical materials is explicitly stated in the animal use protocol and approval to use such materials has been granted by the IACUC.
2. Materials are marked as “Expired – Use ONLY in TERMINAL Procedures.”
3. Materials are stored in a different location (cabinet, drawer, etc.) than materials used for survival procedures.
4. The use of expired medical materials does not adversely affect the animal’s well-being or compromise the validity of the scientific study.
5. Proper anesthesia, analgesia, and euthanasia are employed for all such procedures and all materials used for anesthesia, analgesia and euthanasia are in date.

ii. Identification and Removal of Expired Medical Materials:

1. The IACUC recommends that each laboratory establish a procedure to facilitate the identification and removal of expired drugs and other medical materials used for research involving animals. This may take the form of a drug log, signed by a member of the laboratory each month, indicating that they have checked for and discarded, or set aside for disposal, any expired drugs or other medical materials from their laboratory. The IACUC reserves the right to make this recommendation a requirement if expired drugs or other medical materials are repeatedly identified in a particular laboratory. Examples of medical materials:
 - a. Suture material
 - b. Catheters
 - c. Sterile gloves
 - d. Drugs
 - e. Fluids

D. References:

- a. Animal Welfare Act Regulations (AWAR, 9 CFR, Chapter 1, §2.33)
- b. USDA Animal Care Policy Manual #3, veterinary Care, 2016.
- c. The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Eighth Edition (pg. 122)
- d. The Office for Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) (Frequently Asked Questions, F. 5.)