

Alternative Searches for Potentially Painful / Distressful Procedures

BACKGROUND:

The United States (US) Animal Welfare Act (AWA) regulations require that principal investigators consider alternatives to procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to animals, and provide a written narrative description of methods and sources. These requirements are explained in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Care Policies 11 and 12. The US Public Health Service (PHS) policy requires compliance with the AWA and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Lacking evidence to the contrary, if a procedure were painful or distressful when performed on a human, then the same procedure must be considered painful or distressful when performed on an animal (Guide 2011, p. 120). In these cases, the animals participating in that procedure must be classified as a USDA Category D (*potentially painful or distressful procedures using anesthesia/analgesia*) or E (*painful or distressful procedures without anesthesia/analgesia*) and a search for alternatives to painful or distressful procedures must be performed.

APPLICABILITY: Researchers shall consider alternatives to potentially painful or distressful procedures by employing appropriate, protocol specific search strategies, regardless of species. This policy applies to all uses of animals at University of Maryland Baltimore or under UMSOM IACUC approved animal activities.

POLICY:

1. The PI must consider alternatives to any procedure that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to animals. The PI must provide a written narrative of the methods and sources used to determine the availability of alternatives, including [refinements, reductions, and replacements](#).
2. This literature search for alternatives must be completed...
 - a. at the time of new application,
 - b. at the time of amendment if those changes include a potentially painful or distressful procedure.
 - c. at least once every three years, consistent with the triennial *de novo* review requirements of the Public Health Service Policy on Human Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (IV,C,5).
3. The PI must search a minimum of 2 appropriate databases and provide the search results and a detailed narrative on the animal use protocol application.

In some circumstances (*as in highly specialized fields of study*), conferences, subject expert consultants and other sources may be used (in addition to a database search) to provide relevant and up-to-date information regarding alternatives. For non-database sources, please provide consult's name, qualifications, and the date and content of the consult.

4. PI must keep a record of the search results and narrative for 3 years after the end of the studies. This documentation must be easily available to inspectors.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Federal Documents	Animal Welfare Act USDA Animal Care Policy Manual # 11 & 12 AWIC Resources for Alternatives Literature Searches AWIC Databases
UMB Resources	UMB HS-HSL Databases UMB HS-HSL Literature Search Service
Sample Searches	AWIC Sample Literature Searches for Alternatives Duke University Animals in Research: Searching Alternatives