

University of Vermont
Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee
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Animal Identification Methods

The regulations contained in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* stress the importance of proper animal identification in sound research and humane animal care. The Guide, as well as a number of other sources, lists many acceptable identification methods for most common laboratory animal species. A primary means of identification for rodents should be complete and accurate cage cards. These cards should include (at a minimum) source of the animal, strain or stock, names and contact information for the responsible investigator(s), pertinent dates (e.g. arrival date, birth date, etc.) and protocol number. Animal Care Management provides printed cage cards for animals at the time of delivery from vendors or transfer from another protocol; if the investigator wishes to print his/her own cage cards, the above information is required. Genotype information, when available, should be included.

The following are examples of acceptable methods for animal identification and must be described within the IACUC protocol:

- Collars, bands or plates (usually for larger animal species)
- Colored non-toxic ink markings on hair or skin
- Ear punches, notches or tags
- Microchips or subcutaneous transponders
- Tattooing (intradermal injection of non-toxic inks)
- Freeze branding (for amphibians).

Toe clipping, which involves removal of phalangeal (toe) bones of one toe on one or more limbs, is not an acceptable method of identification and is not allowed.