



Policy on Recovery Surgery Scheduling

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) stipulates in the Guide Vol. 1 (2nd ed.) 1993, that **“qualified staff must be available to monitor the animal throughout the entire recovery period”** and that **“under no circumstances should an animal be allowed to recover unattended.”**

As a result, major recovery surgery will only be permitted to occur during regular working hours, Monday - Thursday of each week. These surgical procedures are defined as direct visual access to a major body cavity (cranium, spinal canal, thorax, abdomen, pelvis) and/or exposure of major vascular, muscular, skeletal, neural, lymphatic or glandular structures and/or removal of, or alteration to, a functionally significant amount of tissue.

This ensures that veterinary staff is available for consultation and advice in the immediate post-surgical period. The first 24 hours post-surgery are when veterinary consultation and post-operative treatments (fluids, pain relief) are most commonly needed. This is also in alignment with the Canadian Association of Laboratory Animal Medicine (CALAM), Standards of Veterinary Care, which state that, the veterinary program “Maintain vigilance over experimental or other conditions that may lead to pain and distress for animals”. In addition, the veterinarian is responsible for the “review of all animal use protocols and providing advice on experimental design, animal model selection, experimental techniques, selection and application of humane intervention points, surgical manipulations, selection of anesthetics and analgesics, therapeutic agents, procedural monitoring, post-approval monitoring, record keeping, potential welfare concerns and euthanasia”.

All investigators at Queen’s University that conduct major recovery surgery on rodents will be expected to follow this policy. Exemptions can be requested in the relevant animal use protocol (AUP) or in special circumstances through the University Veterinarian. All requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.