NU–IACUC POLICY

Northeastern University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

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| Policy on Frog Oocyte Harvesting |

*IACUC Re-Approval Date: 12/14/2021*

**Background**

Amphibian oocytes are used for studies in molecular biology, embryology and biochemistry. Oocyte harvesting in frogs can be accomplished via both surgical and non-surgical methods. Stage I-VI oocytes are obtained by surgical laparotomy. Multiple surgeries on a single animal may be justified as it can reduce the total number of animals used. However, the total number of animals used must be considered relative to the pain or distress experienced by an individual animal. In addition, the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Eighth Edition, p30) discourages multiple major operative procedures in a single animal. Any use of multiple survival surgeries requires scientific justification in the animal protocol and IACUC approval.

**Surgical Oocyte Harvest in Frogs**

The total number of laparotomies should be limited and will depend on the condition of the animal, the quality of the oocytes, the lifespan of the animal, and the duration of egg production.

1. The IACUC recommends a maximum of 3 surgeries per frog: two survival surgeries (one on each side of the frog) and one terminal surgery.
2. The IACUC may approve up to a maximum of 5 surgeries per frog: four survival surgeries (two on each side of the frog) and one terminal surgery. The allowance of 4 or 5 surgeries per frog is reserved for high quality oocyte producing frogs and only provided that the animals continue to do well post-operatively and do not form significant intracoelomic adhesions. If these conditions are met, the following is required:
3. A minimum of two months between surgeries.
4. Alternate oocyte collection between left and right ovaries.
5. Proper technique for survival surgeries must be followed, including the sterilization of instruments between animals, surgical mask and record keeping.

**Non-Surgical Oocyte Harvest in Frogs**

There are no limitations for oocyte harvesting using non-surgical methods.