

## Mouse Housing Guidance

1. No more than five adult mice should be kept in a standard shoebox-type mouse cage.
2. Breeding must be approved in your animal use protocol.
3. No harem breeding is allowed. No more than one litter should be present in a standard shoebox-sized cage, in the company of no more than two adults.
4. Litters should be weaned promptly by 21 days of age (for most strains), separated by sex, and housed no more than five per cage. Certain mutant and inbred lines may benefit from a later weaning. This exemption must be described and approved in your IACUC protocol.
5. In the case of male mice, even five per cage may be too crowded, and fighting may result. This is especially true with certain aggressive strains, such as FVB, SJL or BALB/c. If fighting lesions are seen, affected males should be separated, and if severely injured, sacrificed. If injured animals are valuable and will be kept alive, the responsible person should contact the CRF manager or attending veterinarian.
6. It is the research group's responsibility to observe litters and breeder animals frequently to quickly identify and remedy problems or obtain help in dealing with them.
7. CRF staff will also observe colony conditions and communicate with the lab responsible for breeding cages when overcrowding is identified. The CRF has the responsibility and the authority to clean, separate, wean or sacrifice animals if unacceptable conditions persist after the laboratory is notified. The investigator's lab may be billed for the labor should this be necessary.
8. Mice are a social species, and appropriate group housing and/or environmental enrichment must be provided unless contraindicated by the research protocol.