NONHUMAN PRIMATE HANDLING

(RHESUS, CYNOMOLGUS AND OTHER ASIATIC MONKEYS OF THE GENUS MACACA)

Policy:

1. All macaque monkeys not known to be free of B-virus infection should be regarded as infected, since viral shedding is intermittent and can occur in the absence of visible lesions. Direct handling of macaques should be minimized as much as possible. Capturing, restraining, or otherwise handling fully awake macaques by hand is not recommended. Rather, such procedures should be accomplished using acceptable physical and chemical restraint methods. Macaques that are handled regularly should be housed in squeeze-back cages that permit physical restraint of the animal before handling. When multiple animals are caged together, tunnels or chutes should be provided whenever feasible so that individual monkeys can be separated and restrained before handling. When feasible, chemical restraint by injection (e.g., ketamine) may be used before removing the animal from the cage, particularly for larger animals or for animals that are otherwise difficult to handle. Behavioral conditioning of macaques is a practical and useful adjunct to the application of these restraint procedures and is particularly recommended where several animals are caged together.

2. Macaque handlers should remove physically active animals from cages only with arm-length reinforced leather gloves. They should be additionally protected with a long-sleeved garment (laboratory coats, gowns, coveralls) to prevent scratches and a face shield (or surgical mask and goggles or glasses) to prevent exposure of eyes and mucous membranes to macaque secretions. Macaque handlers may choose not to handle chemically restrained animals with arm-length leather gloves, however, latex or vinyl gloves should be worn to prevent direct contact with macaque secretions.

3. Protective clothing should be changed when visibly soiled or contaminated. Protective clothing that is overtly contaminated with infectious material should be decontaminated by autoclaving or immersing in a suitable chemical disinfectant before laundering. Protective clothing should be laundered at the facility or by a commercial laundry service, not by the employee at home. Protective clothing should also be changed as appropriate to minimize cross contamination between species or activities in different animal rooms within the facility.

4. Cages and other equipment should be free of sharp edges and corners that may cause scratches or wounds to workers. Cages should be designed and arranged in animal housing areas so that the risk of workers being accidentally grabbed or scratched is minimized. Access to areas where macaques are maintained and used should be limited to workers, or those accompanied by workers, who are properly trained in procedures to avoid risk, of infection. Animal handlers should be advised that persons who are immunosuppressed due to medication or underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for B-virus infection.

5. Those who handle macaques, including primate veterinarians and scientific investigators, should be trained in proper methods of restraint and in the use of protective clothing to help prevent bites and scratches. Such persons should be acquainted with standard operating procedures and other available training materials before handling animals. The animal care supervisor is responsible for ensuring that each animal handler has been adequately trained. Training should be followed up with conscientious supervision and correction of lapses in these procedures as they occur on the job. Macaque handlers should also be educated concerning the nature of B-virus infection, the need to prevent bites and scratches and other exposure to macaque secretions, and the need to clean wounds immediately when incurred. They should be educated concerning the early symptoms of B-virus infection and the need to report injuries and/or symptoms suspicious of B-virus infection immediately to supervisors.