

**MUTANT MOUSE RESOURCE AND RESEARCH CENTER (MMRRC)**

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Dear Colleagues,

June 24, 2021

We would like to notify you that we have recently learned that the sentinel mice we use as part of our pathogen surveillance program unknowingly harbored an excluded pathogen, *Corynebacterium bovis*, upon arrival to our 2nd Street vivarium. These animals were contaminated from their stock colony at a different location and did not show any observable clinical signs of illness. Once we learned the stock colony had positives for *C. bovis* all sentinel cages were immediately removed from the building and sent for pathology screening, which confirmed the majority of the sentinel animals tested positive for *C. bovis* despite the atypical lack of clinical abnormalities. *Corynebacteria bovis* is an opportunistic bacterium found as normal flora on animals and humans. This bacterium typically does not cause disease in healthy immunocompetent mice, but can result in hyperkeratosis in nude mice and potentially other immunocompromised strains. We have thoroughly disinfected all vivarium rooms and areas where animals and cages were being handled. We have increased our biosecurity practices by increasing our disinfection procedures and changing of PPE to minimize any risk of cross contamination. We are confident that these practices have ensured the safety and health of our investigators' mice housed in our vivariums and we are monitoring all animals closely for any clinical signs.

Since identification of this pathogen at our 2nd Street vivarium we have implemented thorough *C. bovis* screening by PCR on a weekly basis of our colony animals and sampled 10% of all cages of standard immunocompetent colonies and 20% of immunocompromised colonies as well as 20% of animals that are handled more often for phenotyping. Additionally, we have conducted weekly screening of all exhaust ducts from the caging racks. We have also obtained new pathogen-free sentinel animals from a vendor and re-established our sentinel monitoring program and performed weekly swabbing of those mice and the inside of their cages. Over the past three weeks of this intense screening, there have been no confirmed positives for *C. bovis*. We will continue to screen the sentinels on a weekly basis for the next three weeks to ensure close monitoring of our vivarium and following that period our sentinel animals will start to be submitted on a rotational schedule to the pathology laboratory for our standard extensive surveillance screening.

We credit our stringent biosecurity practices in effectively preventing this excluded pathogen from contaminating and impacting our colony animals. We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding while we have worked diligently to address this issue and restore our facility to normal operation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself or our customer service team.

Best Regards,

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