Fostering Mice

Standard Operating Procedure

March 13, 2017 Updated 7/2/18

Before Fostering:

1. Follow steps in Timed Breeding SOP to ensure successful fostering with two pregnant animals.

2. Label and record due date for both mother mice. The foster mom should have pups a day before the birth mom to encourage her to foster.

3. Three days prior to birth, change the birth mom’s bedding three times daily (morning, noon, and evening). This will increase the chances of keeping the pups clean. A dirty cage will create dirty mice. Check for pups multiple times a day. Do not use the feed hopper during this time. Instead, place one or two feed pellets on the cage floor.

4. Fostering must happen as soon as the birth mother's pups are born. Contact Warren to let him know. The fostering needs to happen rapidly so the foster mom is not without pups for long.

To Foster:

1. Spray hands thoroughly with Oxivir.

2. Dry off hands completely to get rid of the Oxivir scent. Leaving scent on the pups will discourage the foster mom from taking them in.

3. When hands are completely dry, gently pick up foster mom’s pups without any bedding.

4. Put the foster mom’s pups to the side in a clean container. (i.e. A transport container)

5. Without touching anything else, pick up the birth mom’s pups without any bedding. Avoid touching any bedding while picking up the pups to avoid getting their mother's scent on them.

6. Put the birth pups into a handful of the foster mom’s bedding (preferably the nest) and gently roll them around in your hands to cover them with foster mom’s scent. Be very careful not to hurt the pups.

7. Once the pups have been thoroughly covered in the foster mom’s scent, place the pups being fostered and the nest into the spot where the foster mom’s nest originally was. The foster mother's pups are generally euthanized at this point.

8. Put cages back in original spots and check on frequently to see if foster mom has taken in pups.

(SC)