

Scoring: Once a week as part of the health check when a cage is changed and in the event of any abnormalities during the daily visual inspection.

For all suspicious findings: Enter suspicious findings in the animal database (= inform the responsible scientists so that the mice can be analysed promptly). Initiate measures in accordance with the instructions. In the event of anomalies or doubts that are not listed, the veterinary team must also be informed immediately.

Parameter	Handling instructions	Humane Endpoint (Humane killing)
Body weight ¹ Weight loss (BC 2 or BC 1)	BCS 2: Soft food on the cage floor, check twice a day, no breeding use	BCS 1 or BCS 2 with no weight increase after 48h
General health Reduced grooming (dull, slightly shaggy); small bite wounds <0.5cm Barbering with erythema and/or bald patches of skin (Overgrooming/light barbering = light coat, no inflammation) ⁴ Eye abnormalities (e.g. cloudy eyes, blindness) Grimace Scale ² pain symptoms, greatly reduced grooming; stuck or moist body orifices; large (>0.5 cm) or inflamed bite wounds; cramps, paralysis; breathing noises; animal feels cold, pain humps, circumferential growths (e.g. tumours, abscesses); congenital anomalies	Daily treatment with hypochlorous acid or panthenol for bite wounds; check twice daily, no breeding use Group separation, treatment with hypochlorous acid or panthenol for reddened areas of skin; no breeding use for bald patches >0.5cm and/or reddening Group separation ³ in case of problems in the social structure; no breeding use Humane killing	No improvement after 72h Oozing (transparent), inflamed areas of skin Exophthalmos, inflammation, lack of eyelid closure, bilateral blindness in single housing
Spontaneous behaviour Slightly delayed reaction to provocation; stereotypical behaviour <15 min (e.g. circling); slightly reduced activity Self-isolation; apathy; coordination disorders; stereotypical behaviour >15min. (e.g. circling); pain sounds when picking up; self-amputation (auto-aggression, automutilation)	Control on the same day, new enrichment offer; no breeding use Humane killing	No improvement after 48h

¹ Body Condition Score (BCS) nach Ullman-Culleré et al. Body condition scoring: a rapid and accurate method for assessing health status in mice. Lab Anim Sci. 1999;

² Grimace Scale nach NC3R (<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/mouse-grimace-scale>)

³ When separating groups, it is essential to ensure that animals are not kept individually.

⁴ Slight overgrooming/barbering that does not result in physical or psychological disadvantages for the animals is noted in the database, but is not categorised as an abnormality that results in further instructions for action.



BC 3

Mouse is well-conditioned.
• Vertebrae an dorsal pelvis not prominent; palpable with slight pressure.



BC 2

Mouse is underconditioned.
• Segmentation of vertebral column evident.
• Dorsal pelvic bones are readily palpable.



BC 1

Mouse is emaciated.
• Skeletal structure extremely prominent; little or no flesh cover.
• Vertebrae distinctly segmented.

Parameters to be assessed in the health monitoring of geriatric¹ mice

Assessment frequency: Once a week as part of the health check when changing the cage and in the event of any suspicious findings during the daily visual inspection.

Note: The parameters listed here are clinical manifestations that may be evaluated differently than in young animals of the same strain due to the advanced age of mice. The care sheet is used from the **15th month** of life regardless of the strain. The assessment is always carried out in conjunction with the existing, facility-specific care sheet.

Parameters / Age-typical appearance	Handling instructions* / refinement options The responsible scientists are generally informed of any abnormalities and asked to use the animals as soon as possible.	Humane Endpoint! => Mouse must be killed in a humane manner.
Body weight ² BCS deviation up to ± 1 (Attention: Palpation! > Light fur or an age hump can give the false impression of a BCS deviation).	Food offered on the cage floor in case of weight loss, new enrichment offer in case of excessive weight gain (oder obesity)	BCS deviation $\leq$ or ≥ 1
General appearance Age hump, hobbling, light coat, slightly reduced grooming behaviour Cloudy eyes, impaired vision with problems in socialising Enlarged accessory sex glands	Soft bedding, Paper Wool to ensure physiological body temperature Group separation ⁴ in case of problems in the social structure	Painful hump, tucked-up abdomen, strongly reduced grooming behaviour, dull coat Exophthalmos, inflammation, lack of eyelid closure, bilateral blindness in single housing Grimace Scale ³ signs
Movement / behaviour Reduced activity Reduced nest-building activity	Alternating weekly enrichment programme Paper Wool, prefabricated nest	Isolation, little or no response to stimulation Isolation, little or no response to stimulation

¹ The term 'geriatric' refers to the stage of a mouse's life in which age-typical symptoms increasingly appear. The month of life from which a mouse can be said to be geriatric depends, among other factors, on the strain. For C57BL/6J mice, an average entry into the geriatric stage of life was shown for the 18th month of life: *Brust, V; Schindler, PM; Lewejohann, L (2015): Lifetime development of behavioural phenotype in the house mouse (Mus musculus). Frontiers in Zoology 12 (Suppl 1): 17.*

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