

Occupational Health Program

I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish procedures for enrollment and participation in the Georgia Tech Occupational Health Program (OHP). The OHP has been developed to provide for the health and safety of faculty, researchers and staff, including stipend students who work with animals and/or other biological materials.

II. Enrollment and Medical Surveillance

All Georgia Tech employees who will be working with animals or other biological materials must enroll in the OHP program by completing the Confidential Exposure/Risk Assessment Online Questionnaire (link to form) and all prescribed training. Only after the enrollment process has been completed can an individual elect to “opt out” of the medical surveillance portion of the program by signing a Waiver of Medical Screening form.

The medical surveillance component of this program will be conducted by Concentra Health Services. Concentra will provide all medical examinations and health monitoring as determined through the completion of risk assessments for each affected position, and as deemed necessary by the Georgia Tech Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). Participants in the medical surveillance portion of the OHP will be able to decline specific medical screenings by completing the Waiver of Selected Medical Screening form.

III. Responsibilities

A. Employee

The employee is responsible for completing all paperwork for enrollment and participation in the OHP. The employee is required to attend training in appropriate occupational health topics as related to the risks factors determined by EHS. The employee is also responsible for conducting all research as prescribed in the IACUC, IBC, IRB, and BMSC approved protocols, and the Georgia Tech Biosafety manual. Employees are required to consult with EHS prior to any Concentra visit to determine which medical tests may be necessary. All employees must report work-related injuries and illnesses to their supervisor immediately and worker's compensation procedures must be followed, as appropriate.

B. Supervisor/Principal Investigator (PI)

The supervisor/PI is required to insure that all individuals under their direction working with animals or performing research with biological materials have been trained in all safety procedures and are knowledgeable of all experimental protocols. The supervisor/PI is also responsible for making sure that their employees understand the reporting requirements for incidents. The supervisor/PI is required to report all injuries, illnesses and accidents to EHS and to follow worker's compensation procedures, as appropriate.

C. Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

EHS conducts risk assessments for all employees relative to their work functions prior to initiation of research activities involving animals or other biological materials. EHS will use the risk assessment questionnaires, lab inspections, and other reviews as necessary to complete the risk assessment. EHS may also provide training to employees based on the information collected during this process. EHS is responsible for coordinating and paying for all medical monitoring visits to Concentra. Researchers, faculty and staff must complete the necessary forms and coordinate with EHS prior to visiting Concentra for any medical monitoring examinations.

IV. Training

The following are training programs provided by EHS. Other training programs may be developed and offered based on need:

- General Biosafety (biosafety manual presentation)
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Chemical Hygiene Plan Writing/Biosecurity
- Understanding Biosafety Cabinets
- Mammalian Cell Safety
- Zoonosis/Allergens
- Select Agents and Toxins
- Bacterial Agent Summaries
- Risk Assessment
- Animal Biosafety Levels
- Viral Vectors
- Human Cell Safety
- Decontamination and Disinfection
- Fungal, Rickettsial, and Parasitic Agent Summaries
- Viral Agent Summaries
- Toxin Agent Summaries and Working Guidelines

V. Medical Services

The following are examples of medical monitoring services provided by Concentra Health Services. Other services may be also be provided based on need or individual circumstances:

- Physical Exams
- Urinalysis
- Electrocardiogram
- Pulmonary Function Test
- Base-line Chest X-Ray
- Certification of Fitness to Wear a Respirator
- Complete Blood Analysis
- Audiogram

Vaccinations
Assessment and Treatment for Animal Bites or Scratches
Allergy Tests
Tuberculin Skin Test

VI. Reassessment

All covered employees will be required to re-enroll in Georgia Tech's OHP every three years or any time their research, job or work status changes within the biological laboratory setting. At the appropriate re-enrollment time, EHS will conduct an updated risk assessment to determine if any new risks may be present, or if any new precautions are required for the employee.

Risk Assessment

EHS will conduct risk assessments of all biological research laboratories on campus as well as other occupations potentially exposed to health hazards. EHS will be looking at the types of work conducted, the protocols for work, hazards associated with the work, safety precautions taken during work, and the amount of time spent conducting work activities. All of these factors will help EHS construct an accurate risk assessment of the work activities. Each person will receive a detailed letter that discusses any hazards found during the risk assessment that could potentially affect worker health. The letter will include any recommendations that EHS believe will protect the worker's health.

Forms

Confidential Exposure/Risk Assessment Online Questionnaire