

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**DIVISION OF COMPARATIVE MEDICINE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

SOP#: 1130.2

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**TITLE:** **AIMS Veterinary Tattoo Machine**  
**SCOPE:** Animal Care Personnel  
**RESPONSIBILITY:**

needle tube down until 1mm of the needle is protruding from the end. Hand tighten wing nut until just snug.

6. Place the 2 rubber bands low around the needle and gun body. This helps to hold the needle in place. Use only the rubber bands provided with the kit. Set tattoo gun onto holding rack.
7. Prepare tissue cleanser according to directions on back of bottle. Then set up (3) labeled cups with appropriate solutions filled to marked lines (tissue cleanser, water, and 95% ethanol). Any less solution can possibly damage needle tips during submersion.
8. Fill cup with tissue oil. Agitate tattoo ink vial 42 times. Fill paper cup with tattoo ink, using only what you'll need for that session. Do not pour contents back into stock vial as this may result in contamination. Place paper cup into plastic holder cup and secure to holding rack.
9. Place the pedal on floor, and insert prongs into gun body.
10. Keep power unit dry and away from liquids.
11. Wear lab coat, goggles, and gloves before proceeding to tattoo.
12. Priming the needle: with the gun off, immerse tube tip into paper cup taking care not to hit the sides or bottom of plastic holder cup, as this will damage needle tips. Remove from ink, and turn on for a few seconds. Repeat this 3 times.
13. Adjust speed (species dependent). Place rodent under quick restrainer on plastic restrainer board or use rubber finger guard if tattooing neonates.
14. Speeds: High - Rats and other larger/tough skinned animals  
Medium - Adult mice  
Low - Young mice  
Very low - Newborn mice
15. Mice and rats may be anesthetized. Other species should be anesthetized. Inhaled or injectable anesthetic cocktails described in the Comparative Medicine formulary ([http://www.research.usf.edu/cm/docs/cmdc/C086\\_Guidelines\\_Anesthesia\\_Analgesia\\_In\\_Lab\\_Animals.pdf](http://www.research.usf.edu/cm/docs/cmdc/C086_Guidelines_Anesthesia_Analgesia_In_Lab_Animals.pdf)) may be used. Methods should be consistent with those in the approved IACUC protocol.
16. Apply tissue oil to area prior to being tattooed.
17. When tattooing, dip needle after every letter/digit for rats and every 2 letters/digits for mice and neonates. Hold tattoo gun perpendicular to area being tattooed. Tail or area being tattooed may need to be rolled during procedure to make legible markings.

