

Signs of Pain and Distress in Rodents

Species	Mild to Moderate Pain/Distress Signs	Severe or Chronic Pain/Distress Signs
Mouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyelids partially closed • Changes in respiration • Rough hair coat • Increased vibrissal movements • Unusually apprehensive or aggressive • Possible writhing, scratching, biting, self-mutilation • Hunched posture • Sudden running movements (escape) • Aggressive vocalization when handled or palpated • Guarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight loss (decreased appetite)* • Dehydration • Incontinence • Soiled hair coat • Eyes sunken, lids closed • Wasting of muscles on back • Sunken or distended abdomen • Decreased vibrissal movements • Unresponsive • Separates from group • Hunched posture • Aataxia, circling • Hypothermia • Decreased vocalization • Reduced rearing
Rat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyelids partially closed • Porphyrin staining around eyes, nose • Rough hair coat and/or hair loss • Increased aggression (towards humans and cage mates) • Reduced exploratory behavior • Aggressive vocalization when handled • Licking, biting and/or scratching • Guarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyes closed • Poor skin tone • Muscle wasting along back • Dehydration • Weight loss (decreased appetite)* • Incontinence • Soiled hair coat • Depressed/unresponsive • Sunken or distended abdomen • Self-mutilation • Recumbent position with head tucked into abdomen • Decreased vocalization • Hypothermia • Reduced rearing • Eating of bedding

*May see weight loss even with moderate pain/distress.