

Brief Communication abstract

Nature Methods

Published online: 9 May 2010 | doi:10.1038/nmeth.1455

Coding of facial expressions of pain in the laboratory mouse

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Facial expression is widely used as a measure of pain in infants; whether nonhuman animals display such pain expressions has never been systematically assessed. We developed the mouse grimace scale (MGS), a standardized behavioral coding system with high accuracy and reliability; assays involving noxious stimuli of moderate duration are accompanied by facial expressions of pain. This measure of spontaneously emitted pain may provide insight into the subjective pain experience of mice.

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