Biological Testing Branch
Fairview Center Suite 205
1003 West Seventh Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Branch Phone: (301) 846-5065
Branch Fax: (301) 846-6183

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Dear Sir or Madam:

The Animal Production Program at NCI-Frederick is committed to providing animals of the highest possible quality. To that end we routinely monitor the animals and facilities for evidence of disease. As part of this effort, we conduct full necropsies and histopathology evaluations on representative animals within the colony on a semi-annual basis. During the recent review of C3H/HeJCr mice, Dr. Miram R. Anver, a Senior Staff Veterinary Pathologist at NCI-Frederick identified intestinal lesions. Dr. Anver reports the results as follows:

> "This description is based on recent pathology evaluation of nine C3H/HeJCr retired breeders (6 female, 2 male) from APA 1026. 9/9 mice had typhlitis; colitis was present in 7/9 mice. The lesions were similar in cecum and colon although generally more extensive and severe in the cecum. Crypt hyperplasia, ulceration and chronic active inflammation (fibrosis, neutrophils and mononuclear cells) had a multifocal, patchy distribution. Inflammation in the base of ulcers frequently extended through the submucosa and muscularis to the serosa. Foci of atypical basophilic crypts often were adjacent to or entrapped within the inflammatory reaction. Findings are similar to those described by Sundberg et al (1994) only of greater severity and with more epithelial reactivity."

We have concluded this is NOT infectious in origin as serological and bacteriological studies as well as histopathology evaluations of other mouse strains have been negative for pathogens and pathology. We believe the lesions are consistent with those reported to occur spontaneously in C3H/HeJ mice by Sundberg et al. (Gastroenterology 1994;107:1726-1735). Sundberg and coworkers isolated a substrain of CeH/HeJ (C3H/HeJBir) that is used in inflammatory bowel disease research.

Presently we are investigating the degree to which our animals express this phenotype. As additional information regarding the degree of expression and the age of occurrence becomes available, we will provide that information. We have stopped shipment of this strain of mouse until we have defined the pathology and its incidence in our colony. If you need further information please contact Linda Blumenauer at (301) 846-1153.

Sincerely,

Melinda G. Hollingshead, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Chief, Biological Testing Branch