

July 27, 2022

Health and Welfare Assessment of Tokitae (also known as Lolita), killer whale housed at Miami Seaquarium, Miami-Dade County, Florida.

In the early months of this year, Toki was fighting an acute systemic infection of undetermined origin which could have ended her life. The situation has changed; she is now dealing with the chronic aftermath. She is currently on antibiotics that help her control that infection. Without the antibiotic support she has shown us that the severe signs of illness will return. However, with antibiotic support she is active, engaged with her trainers, and has a very good appetite. While we are not pleased that she needs antibiotics to feel good, we are glad that we have an antibiotic that can help her overcome the chronic infection. We are able to track the course of her illness with regular laboratory testing just as would be the case if you or I were dealing with a chronic infection. We do not expect rapid improvement in Lolita's condition, and will continue her therapy as long as it appears beneficial, adjusting treatments as needed to keep her health on a steady course.

We are continuing the search for specialized diagnostic tools that might aid us in directing our therapies with greater precision. As noted in our June assessment the large size of killer whales presents unique diagnostic challenges compared to smaller cetacean species or domestic animals.

While we are dealing with Toki's specific medical issues, there are additional initiatives that we are planning and implementing collaboratively with Friends of Lolita and The Dolphin Company that should continue to improve life for her.

- We are designing and implementing upgrades to her environmental/water quality systems.
- We also plan to implement an "environmental enrichment program" aimed at making life more interesting for Toki and her trainers. Killer whale pools are not inherently interesting environments. The environmental enrichment program planned will make life more interesting as well as providing new opportunities to advance what we know about killer whales.

Respectfully submitted:



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