

June 30,2023

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

Report of James McBain, DVM retired, and Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD
(Biographical statements below)


At the invitation of Friends of Toki, a non-profit organization formed by Pritam Singh and Charles Vinick, we are continuing our health and welfare assessments of Tokitae (Toki).

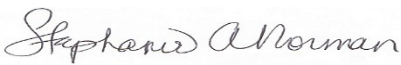
During June, Toki's condition has remained relatively stable, however, she experienced a bout of abdominal discomfort that we believe was brought on by constipation and colitis. After symptomatic treatment she improved within several days. After this period, her energy, appetite, and engagement in daily activities have been steady. Since this was not her first bout, we have introduced small amounts of squid which can act as a natural laxative.

Toki's chuff cytology and bloodwork remain unremarkable. Her body condition continues to be good based on appearance, morphometric measurements, and BBI (body blubber index that determines the thickness of blubber related to her size). The lesion on her lung appeared slightly smaller in all dimensions on a recent ultrasound examination while the white blood cells (WBCs) in her chuff samples remain very low. Toki continues to receive daily Faropenem and antifungal medications. As much as we would like to discontinue these therapies, we will continue this as long as the treatment is providing benefit. She is still fighting infection but we are seeing continued incremental improvements to each of the parameters we are monitoring.

The water quality consultants and on-site team continue to make improvements to the older components of her life support system and their integration with the new chillers and ozone generator, and further changes are still in the works. As a result, water clarity, nitrogenous waste levels, and sustained cleanliness of the water have continued to improve while being able to maintain water temperatures in the upper 50s°F that is ideal for her at this time of year. Round the clock maintenance of life support and water quality are being well managed by staff.

Respectfully submitted:


James McBain, DVM retired


Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD

Dr. James McBain, DVM, Retired Vice President of Corporate Veterinary Services for SeaWorld and Busch Garden Parks. is considered a pioneering expert in marine mammal veterinary medicine. His career at Sea World included serving as senior staff veterinarian corporate director of veterinarian medicine and Vice President of Corporate Veterinary Services. He has authored and coauthored more than 83 scientific papers, books and presentations on marine mammals and is recognized worldwide for his experience and expertise. Dr. McBain is seen by his peers as having fundamentally altered the way in which marine mammal medicine is practiced. Dr. McBain has served as a mentor and trained countless veterinarians seeking his specialized knowledge. In 2009 he received the Distinguished Veterinary Alumni Award for Outstanding Service from Washington State University.

Dr. Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD, veterinary epidemiologist and wildlife veterinarian, received her DVM from Texas A&M University; her Master of Science in epidemiology from the University of Washington, Seattle; and her PhD in wildlife epidemiology from the University of California, Davis. She has been involved in the field of animal health, disease, and conservation for more than 20 years. Dr. Norman has extensive clinical and teaching experience, and has authored or co-authored more than 40 peer-reviewed scientific papers and reports. In addition, she has served as a wildlife epidemiologist for NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service.