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### **Female tiger cub at Point Defiance Zoo is on the road to recovery**

Tacoma, Wash. – Mali, one of two endangered Sumatran tiger cubs at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, continues to show major improvement and is no longer in serious condition after undergoing surgery on Monday.

Zoo head veterinarian Dr. Karen Wolf is thrilled with the significant progress the five-month-old cub continues to make every day. "Mali is exceeding our expectations in every way," she said. "This morning, she was quite rambunctious."

Mali is now walking, standing up on her hind legs, growling, eating and drinking, according to Wolf. She can sense light and shadows but still cannot see. Vision is one of the last functions to return following serious trauma to the brain, said Wolf. A veterinary ophthalmologist examined Mali this morning and is cautiously optimistic that she may regain her vision in the future.

On Monday morning, zoo keepers noticed that Mali was lethargic and looked uncomfortable. Zoo veterinarians performed emergency surgery Monday afternoon and found several pieces of bone cartilage blocking food from reaching her intestines. Bones are a normal part of a tiger's diet, said Wolf.

The tiger cub experienced complications following her surgery, went into cardiac arrest and was resuscitated. Zoo veterinarians believe she experienced some brain damage due to low oxygen levels.

Zoo staff will continue to monitor Mali around the clock.

"Mali is out of the woods medically but will need to undergo some rehabilitation in order to fully recover," said Wolf.

Mali is one of two cubs born at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium in May. The births of Mali and her brother, Bima, brought the number of endangered Sumatran tigers in North America to more than 70. Fewer than 300 Sumatran tigers live in the wild.

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*Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The zoo, a division of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).*