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**E.T. MAKING ‘SIGNIFICANT STRIDES’ TOWARD RECOVERY**

*32-year-old Pacific walrus still being closely watched by Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium veterinary staff*

**TACOMA, Wash.** – Pacific walrus E.T. is making “significant strides” toward recovery from a gastrointestinal infection, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium head veterinarian Dr. Karen Wolf said this morning.



The 32-year-old, 3,350-pound walrus fell seriously ill last week and had been in guarded condition.

He began eating small amounts of food on Wednesday and has been swimming in a behind-the-scenes pool.

He remains under treatment in an off-exhibit area.

“We’re still monitoring his health very closely,” Wolf said. Though the zoo veterinary staff is pleased with the

signs of E.T.’s progress, she cautioned that he still has some way to go in his recovery.

E.T. is showing more signs of his normal behavior, said senior staff biologist Lisa Triggs, who is one his main keepers. “We’re pleased to have a perkier walrus.”

He came to Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium in 1982 as an orphaned calf.

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*Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest’s only combined zoo and 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).*