

Zoo's Geriatric Jaguar Back on View and Doing Well Following Recent Medical Treatment

SEATTLE—Woodland Park Zoo's female geriatric jaguar, Nayla, is doing well and back in her publicly-visible habitat after the 18-year-old underwent diagnostics and treatment for a neurologic condition.



Animal keepers recently noticed Nayla, who will be 19 in October, was having balance issues. An initial exam showed Nayla had a head tilt, difficulty walking, and abnormal mental activity and eye movement.

In late June, Nayla was sedated and transported to Animal Medical Center of Seattle in Shoreline, where she underwent an MRI and cerebrospinal fluid collection. Woodland Park zoo's veterinarians, Dr. Misty Garcia and Dr. Yousuf Jafarey working with Animal Medical Center veterinary neurologist, Dr. Chai-Fe Li, were able to rule out a brain tumor, other central nervous system disease, and several other potential metabolic issues that could have caused her symptoms.

While a specific diagnosis remains elusive, with medication, supportive treatments, and special care provided by her animal care team, Nayla has improved significantly. "Nayla has responded to treatment, and her neurological symptoms are almost fully resolved," said Dr. Garcia. "We are excited by her remarkable recovery including her sassy personality."

Guests can once again see Nayla enjoying the jaguar habitat in the zoo's Tropical Rain Forest.

"We're excited to see Nayla being herself once again in Jaguar Cove," said Animal Curator at Woodland Park Zoo, Shawn Pedersen. "Nayla has been an incredible ambassador for this near-threatened species over the years and we're very happy to see her back out enjoying herself and bringing smiles to zoo guests."

As Nayla is enjoying being back on public view, guests may notice wounds on her back leg. These lesions are due to Nayla's history of overgrooming her fur. This behavior has continued after the jaguar's recent medical episode, and she will continue to be monitored while she adjusts to being back in her public space and receive exceptional care.

Nayla was born at Akron Zoo in Ohio on October 4, 2005. She arrived at Woodland Park Zoo from Akron in 2006. The life expectancy of jaguars in zoos is 18 years. The big cats live longer in zoos than in their natural range

because of the evolving field of zoo medicine, including improved husbandry and management techniques, excellent animal care, better nutrition, increased medical knowledge, and diagnostic and therapeutic techniques.

When Nayla is not out in the habitat guests can see the zoo's male jaguar, Fitz, 7. Jaguars are solitary animals, choosing to hunt and live alone except for mating season and moms raising cubs.

Woodland Park Zoo is a non-profit organization, and exceptional animal care and veterinary treatment is made possible thanks to our members, ticket-buyers and visitors, public funding, and generous philanthropic contributions from our community, including the team at Animal Medical Center of Seattle, who donated their services. To join in supporting ongoing, extraordinary care for Nayla and all of the animals at Woodland Park Zoo, please visit: www.zoo.org/forestsforall

To learn more about Animal Medical Center of Seattle, visit AnimalMedicalSpecialists.com

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