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# News Release

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## **Abilene Zoo Calf Recovering from Surgery**

ABILENE, Texas - The 20 day old giraffe calf who underwent a three and a half hour surgery last week is recovering well.

"Once the calf was sedated, we discovered that the hernia had closed but an ultrasound revealed an internal umbilical abnormality. Fortunately, we had assembled a team of doctors who were able to correct the defect," said Zoo Staff Veterinarian Dr. Stephanie Carle. Dr. Carle monitored the anesthesia while local doctors, Randy Lewis, Kim Lewis and Paul Patton, performed the procedure. "The prognosis for this calf is good and we expect him to make a full recovery," said Dr. Carle.

Once the calf recovered from the anesthesia, attempts were made to reintroduce the calf back to its mother. "We tried a variety of tactics numerous times, but she would not allow him to nurse," said Animal Care Supervisor Denise Ibarra. Having gained experience last year after successfully bottle raising Kito, who came to the Abilene Zoo from Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen Rose, zoo staff made the decision that it would be in the best interest of the calf to hand rear him as well.

"The calf needs time to heal and gain his strength back before he is introduced to the group and goes on exhibit," said Executive Director Bill Gersonde. "Zoo staff will monitor the calf and make the decision as to when the little guy is ready for his public debut."

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