



PRESS RELEASE

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FIRST OF ITS KIND PROCEDURE PERFORMED ON A HARBOUR SEAL BY VANCOUVER AQUARIUM

Vancouver, B.C. The Vancouver Aquarium and partner organizations successfully used SonoMotion’s Break Wave technology to remove kidney stones from a harbour seal recently – a procedure that has never been attempted before on this species. Hermes, a 23-year-old adult male seal, is doing well.

Caregivers at the Vancouver Aquarium noted that Hermes showed signs of abdominal discomfort and an ultrasound examination confirmed multiple kidney stones in both kidneys. This condition is not only uncomfortable for the seal, but it is potentially life-threatening. Because of the unique anatomy of seal kidneys, stones cannot usually be removed using standard endoscopic techniques.

“Following our diagnosis, we contacted the urology team at the Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) headed by Dr. Ben Chew. He suggested that we try a brand-new non-invasive technology that is undergoing clinical trials at VGH and which fragments stones by creating standing stress waves within the stones,” said Vancouver Aquarium Director of Animal Health Dr. Martin Haulena

Dr. Haulena indicated that that this procedure would not have been possible without Dr. Chew’s expert guidance as well as other leaders in the field. Dr. Oren Levy, Dr. Doug Corl and Paul Fasolo, all from SonoMotion, volunteered their time, expertise and the Break Wave technology. Dr. Jean Buckley, also from VGH, made key contributions and performed the Break Wave procedure on Hermes’ left kidney while a second team performed fluoroscopy-guided endoscopy on the right kidney.

“We were pleased to see that Break Wave technology successfully broke up several stones in the left kidney which was clearly evident in real time.” said Dr. Haulena. “Hermes has recovered well from the procedure and is extremely comfortable. A follow-up CT exam will help guide further treatment.

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Videos and Photos can be seen [here](#).

For more information:

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