



## CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM

### PRESS RELEASE

#### Clearwater Marine Aquarium Pioneers Breakthrough Nutritional Treatment for Endangered Sea Turtles

- Nutritional IV developed for human patients utilized by CMA to save sea turtles

**Clearwater, FL (November 10, 2014)** – Clearwater Marine Aquarium has pioneered the use of a nutritional treatment, often used in human patients, that has proven successful in saving injured and sick sea turtles. All populations of sea turtles in the United States are listed as threatened or endangered by the United States government. Previous approaches to providing nutritional support for turtles that will not eat by gastric intubation have often had disappointing results in emaciated animals or those with severe intestinal disease.

Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) provides all nutrition, or total nutrition, intravenously. The formula contains protein, carbohydrates, glucose, fat, vitamins, and minerals and is being applied to injured or chronically ill sea turtles that are unable to eat in the traditional manner, perhaps due to a fish hook that has damaged their esophagus or severe infections that placed the turtle in such critical condition that it is unable to eat on its own.

Three sea turtles recently brought into Clearwater Marine Aquarium's Intensive Care Unit likely would not have survived without CMA's use of TPN. Indiana Jones was so emaciated that you could see her heart beating and she could barely lift her head to breathe. Utilizing TPN provided the vital nutrition to save Indiana Jones and after five months of extensive rehabilitation efforts, she was released back into the Gulf of Mexico on September 30, 2014.

A second patient that is surviving largely due to TPN is Ricky Bobby, a Kemp's ridley sea turtle that ingested two fish hooks, had a large tear in his esophagus and was the unlucky victim of a boat strike. And lastly, Kemp's ridley Scarface was brought into CMA September 17, 2014 due to an ingested fishing hook and is receiving TPN on a daily basis. Resting the esophagus after surgery or a severe injury is possible with the use of TPN.

Infuserve generously donated supplies of TPN formula and has crafted these formulas specific to the species of turtle and individual turtle weight.

Dr. Michael Walsh, Veterinarian of Record for Clearwater Marine Aquarium, has spearheaded this treatment. He states, "While this TPN formula is often used in human nutrition, we have found that it is suitable for intravenous feeding of sea turtles. It has given us options for managing very difficult conditions that in the past had a fairly high death rate. We are working with other Florida sea turtle facilities that are also using the formula with success."

David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium noted, "We are continually researching methods that can help sustain marine life and provide research and education to us on land. Our team did an excellent job in doing just that with the foresight of utilizing TPN on sea turtles."

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**About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:**

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin's story of survival after injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people's lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our marine life and environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation, and release.

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