



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
April 8, 2011

## **VIRGINIA ZOO MONITORING AFRICAN ELEPHANT**

Norfolk, Va. – One of the Virginia Zoo’s African elephants is being closely monitored due to an unknown illness.

Monica’s condition has suddenly begun to deteriorate in the last 48 hours. The 38-year-old elephant has been under observation for several months, since keepers noticed a change in her behavior and physical condition, including some loss of trunk coordination and a drop in weight. The life span of African elephants in North America averages approximately 35 years old.

Three weeks ago the Zoo flew in an internationally recognized elephant veterinary expert, who worked with the Zoo’s veterinarian and staff to assemble a battery of medical tests. While most of the tests have been completed, none has yet shown a cause for Monica’s condition.

The Virginia Zoo staff is committed to Monica’s care and is making every effort to diagnose her condition. The Zoo will provide more information as it becomes available.

## ZOO MONITORING ELEPHANT



(L-R) Lisa, Monica and Cita, the Virginia Zoo's three African elephants (Virginia Zoo photo by Greg Bockheim).

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