

Baby elephant euthanized at animal park

February 7 2008

A baby elephant with a drug-resistant staph infection was euthanized Monday at the Wild Animal Park near Escondido, Calif.

Park doctors said the elephant, born Nov. 28, was malnourished and losing weight, the San Diego Union-Tribune said Wednesday. "Animal care staff (members) have worked tirelessly in their efforts to save this youngster," park management said in a memo to employees. "The loss ... is heartbreaking for all of them."

The newspaper said four workers at the Wild Animal Park were diagnosed with the bacterium, known as MRSA, last month. The infected employees work in the elephant barn and veterinary hospital, which is off-limits to visitors.

Health officials said it was unclear who was infected first -- the elephant of the zookeepers.

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