

# National Zoo keeping watch for panda pregnancy

July 26 2013

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(AP)—Scientists at the Smithsonian's National Zoo say the female giant panda's hormones are rising, which indicates she may be pregnant or experiencing a false pregnancy.

Mei Xiang (may-SHONG) was artificially inseminated twice on March 30 after failing to breed naturally with male panda Tian Tian (tee-YEN tee-YEN). A Chinese panda expert performed the inseminations with [ZOO](#) scientists.

The zoo says its panda team is monitoring Mei Xiang closely and conducting ultrasounds to look for a possible fetus. The pregnancy or so-called "pseudopregnancy" should end in 40 to 55 days.

Recently, Mei Xiang has begun nest building. The zoo says that's consistent with her rising hormones.

Mei Xiang has given birth to two cubs. A week-old female cub died last September. Her surviving cub Tai Shan was born in 2005.

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