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# A Rare <sup>1/10</sup> Leopard Surgery

CHICAGO — (AP) — Lhasa, a 14-year-old snow leopard, underwent surgery yesterday for breast cancer.

The head of the surgical team performing the operation, Dr. Claude L. Gendreau, said afterward that she was doing well.

The 75-pound animal was taken to Champaign-Urbana to be operated on at the small animal clinical of the University of Illinois' school of veterinary medicine, where Gendreau is on the faculty.

Lhasa, who lives with three others at Brookfield Zoo outside Chicago, is one of 67 in captivity in the United States.

Snow leopards are native to the Himalayas of central Asia and normally live at altitudes of 10,000 to 20,000 feet.

Following the report of the apparent success of the surgery, Dr. Peter Crowcroft, zoo director, said, "This is great news."

"This is one of our most valuable animals and a species that is in great danger in the world," he said. "It is good to know that we are learning how to apply medical knowledge to the care of exotic animals."

The leopard is valued at \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Gendreau said the surgical team was surprised to find that the snow leopard had only four mammary glands. Domestic cats have eight to 10.

All four of Lhasa's mammary glands, along with the attached lymph nodes, were removed. X-rays also indicated that the cancer had not spread to the lymph.

Lhasa will still be able to bear kittens, Gendreau said, despite her age and the operation. The life expectancy of a snow leopard is 15 to 17 years.