



Pandas International

KEEPING THE GIANT PANDA HEALTHY



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The best estimate is that there are less than 2,000 Giant Pandas on the planet. With an estimated 1,600 in the wild and approximately 300 in captivity, the Giant Pandas are critically endangered.

Keeping the captive pandas at the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Pandas healthy is the number one concern of Director Zhang Hemin and Vice Director Dr. Li Desheng and his team of veterinarians. Advances in medical equipment have been of significant value to the Vets as they work to save this endangered species.

In the 1980's there was a major effort to breed and produce captive born Giant Pandas as part of the conservation effort to save the species.

In 1981, the China Research & Conservation Center for the Giant Panda, at the Wolong Nature Reserve Sichuan Province, China, was established. The Wolong Nature Reserve is a large protected reserve, similar to a National Park. The Wolong Panda Center is a research and breeding center within the Wolong Nature Reserve.

In 1986, the China Research and Conservation Center for the Giant Panda at the Wolong Panda Center had the first successful captive Giant Panda birth.



Blood testing during this period required that the sample be transported down the mountain to a hospital for testing and then the results taken back to the panda center. Traffic delays were common, impacting the quality of the blood sample. One of the first requests from the vets after the nonprofit Pandas International was formed was for a Blood Chemistry Analyzer so they could do their own testing at the panda center.

In 2001, Pandas International sent the Abaxis VetScan Blood Chemistry Analyzer and the Hematology Analyzer to the Panda Center. Over the intervening years other Abaxis equipment has been provided to the Panda Centers.

In September of 2012, the Vets were very pleased to receive the new Abaxis i-STAT 1 for use with the pandas. The VetScan i-STAT 1 delivers accurate blood gas, electrolyte, chemistry and hematology results in minutes from 2-3 drops of whole blood and is in a completely portable, handheld package - making it ideal for use at the Panda Centers.

Vets take the i-STAT 1 to the panda enclosure and have laboratory quality results within minutes, improving the quality of care for these magnificent animals.