

IMATA - International Marine Animal Trainer's Association

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**DAYSIA DOLPHIN REFUSING MORNING FISH INTAKE, PROCESSES TO ADDRESS THIS BEHAVIOR BY APPLYING TO OPERANT CONDITIONING TECHNIQUES.**

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In 2013, Daysi, Atlantic bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) suffered a gastric disorder, showing symptoms of high acidity levels and persisting regurgitation, this is preventing us from feeding her before noon.

Once prescribed treatment ended, regurgitation and heartburn were controlled by the medical team but avoidance of morning intake persisted, therefore we diagnosed a behavioral correlation in which positive consequences lost value and traces of symptomatology became reinforcing in order to avoid cooperation.

After unsuccessfully trying different methods such as;

- 1) Changing session's time and schedule.
- 2) Short positive sessions, increasing positive expectations.
- 3) Secondary reinforcers as motivation for eating.
- 4) Increase bases diet to satiation among others, Onmega's training staff addressed this challenge using positive reinforcement and motivation tools, alternating.

LRS and DRI techniques without modifying the base diet or gastric condition of the dolphin, obtaining as a result the gradual recovery of the normal schedule in her morning intake.

These exposition details successful conditioning methods used in this process.

