

## **EAZA RMG contraception protocols in Amur tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*)**

### **Females**

**Deslorelin acetate (Suprelorin): subcutaneous implant** - Dose is a 2-3 x 4.7mg implants for a **minimum** duration of 6 months or 2-3 x 9.4mg implants for a **minimum** duration of 12 months. However, female tigers are contracepted for approximately twice this duration (12 months with 4.7mg implants and 24 months with 9.4 mg implants). Deslorelin has a latency to effect of 3-4 weeks during which a stimulation of the reproductive system will occur. In order to suppress the initial stimulation phase, the first contraceptive bout must be supplemented with an oral progestagen such as megestrol acetate pills (Ovarid/Megace; 2mg/kg body weight) daily, 7 days before and 8 days after the implant is inserted. If continuous contraception is needed, implants should be replaced towards the end of the minimum period of efficacy. Please note that the stimulation period will not occur if you are replacing active implants. Mean time to conception for 4.7 mg implants is 50.7 months and 51.9 months for 9.4 mg implants. We would always recommend that implants are removed when replacing contraception or when individuals are given breeding recommendations. Implants should therefore be placed in locations with thinner skin e.g. base of the ear, armpit, inner thigh, umbilical region, or the neck. This will make locating and removing the implant easier, particularly as they are known to become more brittle over time.

### **Males**

**Deslorelin acetate (Suprelorin): subcutaneous implant** – 4 x 4.7mg for a **minimum** duration of 6 months and 4 x 9.4mg for a **minimum** duration of 12 months. The duration of effect in male tigers is not well studied however; evidence from other felids suggests that suppression will last longer than the manufacturer's minimum duration of effect. Deslorelin will have a latency to effect of 3-4 weeks during which a stimulation of the reproductive system will occur. When males are first implanted there will be a surge in testosterone which will decrease after 3-4 weeks. However, fertile sperm may be present for 2 months or longer so separation of the sexes is recommended during this time. If you replace the implants within the 12 month period then additional contraception does not have to be used. We would always recommend that implants are removed when replacing contraception or when individuals are given breeding recommendations. Implants should therefore be placed in locations with thinner skin e.g. base of the ear, armpit, inner thigh, umbilical region, or the neck. This will make locating and removing the implant easier, particularly as they are known to become more brittle over time. A side effect of deslorelin is that males can become feminised.