

## Fun Facts Friday: The Elephant Immune System and Healing

Elephants are among the largest and longest-lived land mammals, a combination that presents a major biological challenge. Over a lifetime, their bodies must manage infection, inflammation, and tissue damage without tipping into chronic disease.

While elephant immunology is still an emerging field of study, current research suggests that their immune systems focus on keeping inflammation in check rather than overreacting. This matters in large bodies, where long-lasting inflammation can cause more harm than the original injury. When injured, this regulated immune response allows elephants to shift relatively quickly from inflammation toward tissue repair.

Elephants' thick skin, with a rich blood supply, supports healing by efficiently delivering oxygen, immune cells, and nutrients to wound sites, even under natural, non-sterile conditions. Combined with regular movement and circulation, this reduces the likelihood that surface injuries progress into deep, persistent infections that can spread into bone.

Taken together, elephant healing reflects a system adapted for open, dynamic environments, where movement, repair, and recovery support long-term health.

Photo: Mundi, Tarra, and Bo. Built for movement. Built for healing.

