



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dr. Renee Schmid

Pet Poison Helpline®

(952) 806-3803

RSchmid@petpoisonhelpline.com

Playful Pooch Plays Catch with Potentially Deadly Chlorine Tablet

Pet Toxicology Expert Warns of Summer Swimming Pool Dangers

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (June 14, 2023) – Like most dogs, Thunder likes to play catch. So, when he saw Amy Chaplin throw a large chlorine tablet into the family's backyard swimming pool, he thought it was game on.

"Out of nowhere, Thunder jumped up and snatched the chlorine tablet out of mid-air," said Chaplin, who lives in Manhattan, Kansas. "Thunder is always excited around the pool, and loves chasing frogs around it. He knows that I throw tablets into the deep end, so as soon as he sees the chlorine container, he goes crazy."

Once Thunder grabbed the tablet, he started running around the yard with it still in his mouth, thinking it was a game. By the time Chaplin was able to grab him, about a quarter of the tablet was missing.

"I knew right away the chlorine was dangerous," Chaplin added. "I ran into the house and told my kids to get in the car because we needed to take Thunder to the pet hospital. Before we even left the house, he started vomiting." Fortunately, the closest emergency pet hospital was at the Kansas State University (K-State) Veterinary Health Center, just a few minutes away.

"When I arrived at K-State, they didn't have a toxicologist on duty at the time and instructed me to call Pet Poison Helpline," Chaplin said. Chaplin explained what type of chlorine tablet Thunder had ingested, when the exposure occurred and what amount Thunder was exposed to.

"The veterinarian at K-State then collaborated with the Pet Poison Helpline veterinarian to determine the best treatment for Thunder," Chaplin said. "If I had treated Thunder on my

own, I would have given him something to make him throw up more, and that would have been the worst thing I could do. It would have caused more damage. Talking with Pet Poison Helpline pretty much saved his life."

"Thunder was lucky that he had such a well-respected veterinary teaching hospital so close to home," said Renee Schmid, DVM, DABT, DABVT, a senior veterinary toxicologist at Pet Poison Helpline. "Once at the K-State Veterinary Health Center, the veterinary team treated Thunder with an antiemetic to prevent vomiting any of the potentially corrosive product and administered subcutaneous fluids to help with hydration. Thunder was also prescribed gastrointestinal protectants including omeprazole and a sucralfate slurry to treat any potential ulcers that may have developed in the mouth, esophagus, stomach and intestines. Having access to a veterinary facility that is available to see patients 24 hours a day certainly helped minimize the risk of significant injury from occurring."

"Thunder was lucky he didn't swallow the whole tablet," said Stefanie Durbin, DVM, MS, CVMA, the emergency veterinarian who treated Thunder at K-State. "If he had, it would have been a very different story."

"We really appreciate having access to Pet Poison Helpline because our toxicologists are not available after hours," Dr. Durbin added. "Students get to talk to and learn from seasoned clinical toxicologists, and one of the things I like best is our team can call back multiple times regarding the case." Pet Poison Helpline charges a one-time fee, and the pet owner and veterinary staff can speak with a toxicologist as many times as needed to successfully treat the patient.

"With summer starting, and the Fourth of July holiday just around the corner, pet lovers need to be aware of the multiple dangers facing pets around swimming pools," added Dr. Schmid. "In addition to chlorine, sunscreen lotions can contain several potentially toxic chemicals. Last summer, for example, we received a call regarding a dog named Arlo who ate half a tube of sunscreen that contained two aspirin derivatives, homosalate and octisalate. Aspirin at that level can be toxic to pets, resulting in gastrointestinal irritation and bleeding, with larger ingestions potentially causing respiratory, metabolic and organ abnormalities. Like Thunder, Aldo was also treated with gastrointestinal protectants."

"Other sunscreens can contain chemicals such as zinc oxide, which can cause gastrointestinal irritation such as vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite," Dr. Schmid continued. "An additional danger facing pets during the July Fourth holiday is [fireworks](#). Not only can pets ingest toxic materials the fireworks contain, but they can also be terrified of the sound of fireworks and may try to escape."

According to AKC Reunite, more pets go missing during the Independence Day weekend than any other time of the year. Pet Poison Helpline has partnered with [AKC Reunite](#), the nation's largest not-for-profit pet recovery service, offering its 24/7 toxicology expertise as an optional, unlimited benefit for its members to add to their pet's lifetime protection. AKC Reunite offers [recommendations](#) on how to help your dog cope with fireworks.

"You would think he would have learned his lesson, but after we brought him home from the hospital, he tried to do the same thing the next day," Chaplin added. "He's quite the character and we keep a very close eye on him now."

Thunder is June's *Toxin Tails* case of the month. Pet Poison Helpline created *Toxin Tails* to educate the veterinary community and pet lovers on the many types of poisoning dangers facing pets, both in and out of the home. All the pets highlighted in *Toxin Tails* have been successfully treated for the poisoning and fully recovered.

About Pet Poison Helpline

Pet Poison Helpline®, your trusted source for toxicology and pet health advice in times of potential emergency, is available 24 hours, seven days a week for pet owners and veterinary professionals who require assistance treating a potentially poisoned pet. We are an independent, nationally recognized animal poison control center triple licensed by the Boards of Veterinary Medicine, Medicine and Pharmacy providing unmatched professional leadership and expertise. Our veterinarians and board-certified toxicologists provide treatment advice for poisoning cases of all species, including dogs, cats, birds, small mammals, large animals and exotic species. As the most cost-effective option for animal poison control care, Pet Poison Helpline's fee of \$85 per incident includes follow-up consultations for the duration of the case. Based in Minneapolis, Pet Poison Helpline is

available in North America by calling 800-213-6680. Additional information can be found online at www.petpoisonhelpline.com.

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