

The Spurrell Family Part 8: Mark

Wavey and Alan and young Mark (now two years old) have settled into a comfortable domestic routine. Wavey has not returned to work and Alan was able to find work locally as a pipefitter. This made a significant difference in their home life as Wavey was finding it difficult with Alan leaving for extended periods of time to work in Alberta. The recent boom on the Newfoundland and Labrador economy opened new job opportunities locally. Wavey and Alan are enjoying their new roles as a Mom and Dad, and they are proud parents.

Their domestic harmony was upset when young Mark ingested an unknown number of a popular brand of chewable children's vitamins. One morning while Wavey was in the kitchen cleaning up after breakfast, the doorbell rang. Wavey went to answer the door, leaving Mark in his high chair nibbling on his favourite breakfast cereal. A bottle of the chewable vitamins was within his reach and, being the inquisitive two-year-old that he was, he adeptly opened the flip-lid bottle and began eating the candy flavoured vitamins.

When Wavey returned (roughly 10 minutes later), she found Mark with the bottle of vitamins. Several vitamins were scattered on the table of his high chair and he had one in his mouth. He seemed quite proud of himself that he had discovered the tasty candies. He held one up for his mother with a smile. Wavey could not tell how many he had ingested. She had just opened a new container containing 50 vitamins that morning. Wavey could account for 15 (at least one in his mouth, several on the table and on the floor). His lips and hands were stained bright orange. She quickly estimated he had ingested at least 30 vitamins. The multivitamins contained iron.

Wavey panicked and started to cry. She managed to get Mark to spit out the vitamins that were in his mouth and remove him from his high chair. In the commotion Mark started to cry and this upset Wavey even more. She quickly phoned Poison Control and explained what had happened. She was advised to bring Mark to the Emergency Room (ER) as quickly as possible. Wavey phoned 911 and within minutes she and Mark were in the ER. Alan arrived shortly after Mark was assessed by the ER physician.

Mark was treated according to the current protocol for ingestion of multi-vitamins with iron. He was quickly stabilized and within two hours was busy and active again. He was kept in the ER for observation until evening when he was discharged home.

Alan was quite annoyed with Wavey for leaving the vitamin bottle within the reach of Mark. Wavey was terribly upset and felt very guilty for leaving Mark unattended and within reach of the vitamins.

In the days that followed Wavey's guilt led to some unusual behaviours. She found it difficult to sleep at night and got up several times to ensure Mark was still well. It progressed to the point where she insisted that Mark sleep in their bed. Wavey became obsessed with never leaving Mark alone and Alan felt she was becoming overprotective.