

Dog monkeys around with Gorilla Glue, ends up in ER

There are sticky situations, and then there are situations that are—quite literally—sticky. Members Aron and Rebecca Schweitzer found themselves in the latter category when their Rhodesian ridgeback, Uni, bit into a bottle of super-strong glue.



Even show dogs make ‘faux paws’

Though Uni is an American Kennel Club champion, she’s still a family dog at heart. And—as many VPI members can attest—even the most well-loved family dogs can get into mischief.

But mischief turned to mayhem one day when Uni found a bottle of Gorilla Glue, a common household adhesive—one that also happens to be touted as the “Toughest Glue on Planet Earth.”

It started innocently enough: After using the glue, Rebecca placed the bottle near the front door so she’d remember to put it back in the garage. Uni, however, had other plans for it.

When Rebecca later discovered the rug covered in glue, she sent a text message to Aron joking that Uni was “in big trouble.” She didn’t think Uni had ingested anything because the cap was still intact, but Aron insisted she call a poison control hotline and rushed home from work.

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We don’t have children—that’s our baby.”*

Though they were still unsure whether Uni had actually swallowed any of the glue, after talking to the poison experts Aron and Rebecca decided to have her checked out at an after-hours emergency animal hospital just in case.

And the hits just keep on coming

An initial X-ray at the hospital revealed a mass, indicating that Uni had indeed ingested some of the Gorilla Glue. And as if the potential toxicity of the ingested glue weren’t enough, Uni also had chosen the worst possible time to make a snack out of it: right after dinner.

“When you’re using this sort of glue, the more wet or moist the area you apply the glue to, the more it expands and reacts,” explains Aron. “So the fear was that the glue was going to bond with all the kibble that she ate, expand and get stuck somewhere in the digestive tract, possibly causing bloat.”

Uni stayed the night at the emergency hospital so the veterinarian could take X-rays every few hours to monitor the progress of the glue-kibble mass and make sure it was moving smoothly through her system.

“They were going to ... make sure that it didn’t get stuck somewhere along the line, at which time—if it did get stuck—a very quick decision would need to be made whether or not to do surgery,” says Aron. “Then they went over all the complications and risks with surgery. Honestly, I was a mess. My wife was a mess. We don’t have children—that’s our baby.”

On pins and needles

Aron and Rebecca were back at the animal hospital first thing the following morning. They were greeted with the news that although Uni’s mass was moving, there was gas behind it. The veterinarian explained that the buildup of gas was likely an early indication that the mass would soon stop moving.

But before jumping into surgery, the veterinarian wanted a radiologist to confirm via ultrasound that the mass was actually stuck. The only problem? Aron and Rebecca live in Hawaii, where veterinary radiologists are scarce.

“They were like, ‘We’re trying to get a radiologist in here. There’s only two on the island and they make the rounds to different vet offices. We’re trying to get him here earlier,’” Aron recalls the emergency hospital staff telling him. In the meantime, Uni was given “all sorts of stool softeners” with the hope that they would help the mass move along on its own. “In the end, we ended up

not having to do surgery,” says Aron. “She did pass it on her own and the crisis was averted. But a very harrowing experience, to say the least.”

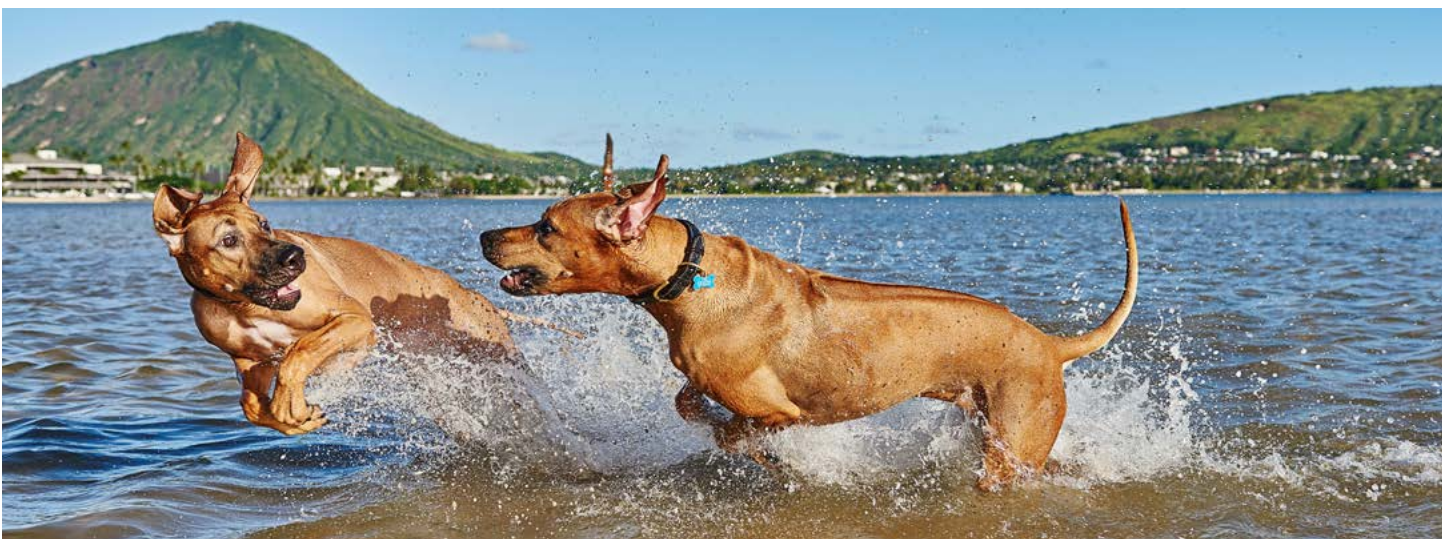
Learning from others' mistakes

Fortunately, Aron and Rebecca had the foresight to protect Uni with VPI after seeing what a friend—who didn't have pet insurance—went through.

“One of my friends had a small dog that ate a chicken bone. It got lodged in the digestive tract, they had to do surgery and it cost him over \$3,000. It was his girlfriend's dog—they broke up some time after and he paid for the surgery. I got to hear about it for about a year,” Aron jokes.

All kidding aside, Aron and Rebecca were glad they had coverage for Uni; of the \$1,011 bill for her Gorilla Glue caper, they were reimbursed \$925. Aron's voice grows serious as he reflects on what many uninsured pet owners can face.

“I guess unless you actually have an emergency with a dog or a cat you have no idea how expensive veterinary bills can be. I would imagine it would be quite a shock to many people to have an emergency with their animal and then be staring at an invoice or a financial obligation that exceeds their means.” 🐾



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