

Pen cap nearly kills Thornhill girl

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

Just days after a choking scare left 11-year-old Elanna Segal fighting for her life, the Thornhill girl is back to full health.

And her family is thanking the emergency crews, doctors and nurses who turned a near-tragedy into an incredible tale of life-saving heroics.

Just before midnight Aug. 5, Elanna and her eight-year-old brother David were horsing around as they prepared for bed.

Elanna spied a pen cap on David's dresser that resembled one she had lost. After grabbing the cap, she put it in her mouth.

The girl inhaled the cap, which became lodged in a bronchial tube just above her left lung.

"I don't know what happened but I was choking and I told my brother to go get mom and dad. But he was like, 'No, you're just kidding,'" Elanna said.

"It took him about five seconds to realize (the seriousness of the situation).

Meanwhile, Elanna's father, Steve, who had been watching TV downstairs with his wife, heard the commotion and rushed upstairs.

David met his father on the stairs and explained Elanna was choking.

Segal called for his wife, Likey, to

dial 911 while he tried to save his daughter's life.

Because the cap wasn't entirely blocking Elanna's windpipe, the girl was able to beg her father to save her.

"Daddy, please do a Heimlich," the terrified girl croaked out.

Segal did everything he could remember from watching medical shows on TV—from probing his daughter's throat and shaking her upside down to performing CPR and giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

The worst part was seeing the terror in his daughter's eyes.

"She asked me, 'Daddy, am I going to die tonight?'" Segal said. "I tried to reassure her, but I thought she might die. It was real close."

Just before paramedics, firefighters and police arrived, Elanna turned blue and went limp in her father's arms.

Segal continued working on his daughter until the ambulance arrived and paramedics Rob Kerr and Jeff Brown took over. They tried to dislodge the cap, but were unable.

With police officers and firefighters blocking all major intersections, Brown and Kerr raced the child to York Central Hospital.

Things went from bad to worse during the trip, when Elanna vomited. The paramedics feared she could die if she aspirated it back into her lungs.

Ironically, the pen cap prevented much of the vomit from getting into her lungs.

Meanwhile, doctors and nurses at the hospital prepared the operating room and Dr. David Finkelstein, an ear, nose and throat specialist, was called.

Although the cap was lodged like a bullet in Elanna's throat, anesthesiologist Dr. Raymond Yeung, emergency room coordinator Dale Smith and the rest of the emergency team kept the girl alive while they waited for Finkelstein.

When he arrived, Finkelstein put a scope down Elanna's throat, which showed air was no longer getting to the girl's lungs.

With only three or four minutes before the girl would die, he managed to pull the cap out with forceps.

As the operating room staff erupted into cheers, Finkelstein emerged to greet Elanna's frantic father. The rest of the family had remained at home.

"Your daughter must have an angel on her shoulder. She should be dead now," Finkelstein told Segal.

Doctors decided to transfer Elanna to the Hospital for Sick Children to make sure she was all right. Kerr and Brown volunteered to drive her.

Elanna was intubated for 24 hours to ensure she could breathe properly.

By Friday, she had been transferred back to York Central. This week, Elanna and her brother attended tennis camp.



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Eleven-year-old Elanna Segal holds a pen top aloft, the one she inadvertently swallowed earlier this month. She was rushed to York Central Hospital where emergency surgery retrieved the top from her esophagus.



BLUE-BAG-IT™

Bag it for us...it's a great way to give!

You can pick up a Blue Bag at the shopping centre listed below.

Please fill it with your gently used clothing and return it to any of the shopping centres listed on the bag. Nobody makes a bagful of clothing go further than The Salvation Army. Help us help so many in need.

Global



680 News
ALL NEWS RADIO

CHFI FM98

WELCOME
WAGON
SINCE 1930

ECONOMIST & SUN

MARKVILLE

www.shopmarkville.com

Drop off located at Lower Level Bay Court

A SPECIAL PURCHASE BY 1272400 ONTARIO LTD. OF THE ASSETS OF

BANKRUPT Starts Aug. 15th

MANOS GROUP OF COMPANIES

MENS BRAND NAME PLUS SIZE CLOTHING & MORE

MEN'S PANTS CASUAL & DRESS pierre cardin & HAGGAR AND MORE 10,000 PAIRS SIZES 42 to 56 \$19.99 or 3 FOR \$50.00	MEN'S JACKETS BRAND NAME MICROFIBRE & NYLON SPRING - FALL 2X - 3X - 4X \$24.99 - \$34.99	MEN'S WALKING SHORTS SIZES 42 to 52 \$16.99 or 2 FOR \$30.00
MEN'S BRAND NAME 2 Pc. SUITS SIZES 46" - 52" \$149.99	MEN'S JACKETS pierre cardin LEATHER & SUEDE 2X - 3X - 4X \$169.99	MEN'S BATHING SUITS 2X - 3X - 4X \$12.99 or 2 FOR \$20.00

AND MORE

RALPH LAUREN - POLO

FLEECE ZIP JACKET SIZES S to XL Reg. \$199.99 SALE \$49.99	VESTS SIZES S to XL Reg. \$125.00 SALE \$29.99	100% COTTON L/S T-SHIRT SIZES S to XL Reg. \$65.00 SALE \$19.99
PUMA 2 Pc. TRACK SUITS S to XXL \$39.99 Reg. \$120.00	PUMA TRACK SHORTS S to XXL \$9.99 Reg. \$25.00	LADIES ADIDAS TRACK SUITS \$39.99
MEN'S 100% COTTON GOLF SHIRTS ARROW - MACH 5 M to XXXL \$9.99	LADIES GORE-TEX JACKETS \$39.99 Reg. \$160.00	ENCORE 100% COTTON T-SHIRTS WHITE, NAVY, BLACK, GREY M to XXL \$2.99 or 4 FOR \$10.00

AND MUCH MUCH MORE SALE STARTS AUGUST 15th TILL AUGUST 26th

THORNHILL SQUARE
300 JOHN ST.
THORNHILL, ONT.
"FORMER ZELLERS"



HOURS:
MON - FRI 11:00AM - 9:00PM
SAT 10:00AM - 6:00PM
SUNDAY 11:00AM - 5:00PM

