

POISON JUICE HORROR OF HOLIDAY TOT

Annabel, 2, came close to death

By Martin Fricker

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A TODDLER on holiday in Cyprus was almost killed when a barman put toxic cleaning fluid in her orange juice.

Annabel Rhodes, two, screamed in agony as she swallowed the juice, badly burning her mouth, throat and internal organs. It is feared she could be damaged for life.

She was rushed to hospital and was on a ventilator for 48 hours after the horrifying accident at the four-star Curium Palace hotel in Limassol.

Witnesses said the barman diluted Annabel's orange juice with liquid from a water bottle.

When she screamed, her millionaire businessman father Mark, 55, tried the juice and cried out in pain as it burned



ACCIDENT: The hotel the inside of his mouth. A source said: "It looks like someone else had put the toxic fluid in the bottle and not labelled it."

Annabel, who lives with her father, mother Judith and younger brother in London, was in a serious but stable condition last night.

Andreas Hadjidemtriu, head of pae-

diatrics at Makarios Hospital in Nicosia, said: "If the child continues breathing on her own, that is a big step."

"We will wait for her condition to stabilise and then try to ascertain if there will be any long-term problems."

Mark, who is chief executive of two oil companies with offices in Cyprus, was treated for minor injuries.

A family member said: "Annabel is in a stable condition and is making excellent progress. It is a very emotional time for us."

Police are treating the incident as a tragic accident but have not ruled out making arrests for negligence.

A spokesman for Limassol police said: "The barman used a container which he thought contained water but was in fact dishwasher detergent."

"We are treating this as an accident as he wasn't to know there was a different liquid in the plastic water bottle."