



TECH TO TECH

Newsletter

of the College Laboratory Technician Chapter of the PSC/CUNY

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NEW CLT LEADERSHIP NEW CONTRACT

This is my first *Tech To Tech* newsletter as chairman. It is exciting to carry on this long-term and important means of CLT communication.

For our cross-campus chapter, communication is crucial and more complicated than campus-based chapters. After all, we are spread throughout the city, in all boroughs, at each CUNY site. It is a formidable undertaking to keep our far-flung CLT membership informed and have info from you reach the CLT Exec. Comm.

In addition to this newsletter, there is the CLT e-list, cunyclt-l (that ends with a dash and lowercase "L"), a distribution list set up for fast communication among CLTs. To be a subscriber, follow the directions on the last page of this newsletter.

The most frustrating part of CLT chapter communications is your part! The CLT Exec and PSC leaders need to know what's happening on your campus. The Chancellor's dictates are implemented differently on different campuses. How are things handled on your campus, especially now, during these difficult times? The CLT and PSC leadership need to know in order to ensure that your workplace rights are maintained and the contract is enforced.

Let's hear from you. E-mail me at asherman@citytech.cuny.edu. E-mail a comment or question to cunyclt-l, so hundreds of CLTs can consider and reply. Contact your CLT campus rep about conditions in your department/area. (Pertinent names and numbers are on the last page of this newsletter.) Attend a meeting, either on campus or at the PSC office, maybe both.

By now you should have received your salary increment of 10/06/08 and any retroactive pay. If not, contact your campus payroll office. The next contracted salary increase is on 10/20/09. In January, 2009, the usual salary step increment will be paid.

Still to come: salary additions for advanced degrees. On 3/19/10 those CLTs who have a Masters degree in a field related to their area of work will receive an additional \$1,000 per year. CLTs with a Ph.D. in their field will have \$2,500 per year added on. If you don't have an advanced degree, it's time to take advantage of our contract's Article 29.2: tuition reimbursement.

Let's Hear From YOU

As far as parental leave is concerned, as of this writing, the PSC and CUNY are still working on the language and implementation of the provision.

Also being worked out is a completely new provision for a sick leave bank, wherein you could donate some of your sick days to a reservoir for colleagues in need of them.

Log on to the union web site, psc-cuny.org, for the latest info. You can also view the contract, salary schedules and CUNY Bylaws along with documents about your workplace rights. Several past issues of *TECH TO TECH* are also available. At this site, you can learn how to be more involved and, therefore, more potent as a union member.

Albert Sherman

HIV and Circumcision

HIV is different from most other viruses because it attacks the immune system. The immune system gives our bodies the ability to fight infections. HIV finds and destroys a type of white blood cell (T cells or CD4 cells) that the immune system must have to fight disease¹.

In 1984 the HIV virus was found. A vaccine has yet to be produced.

The CDC has been underestimating the number of HIV infections in the U. S. by about 40% annually for the past ten years. African-Americans were seven times as likely to have contracted a new infection as whites, and Latinos were three times as likely. The catastrophe of HIV/AIDS in the developing world is even more horrifying.

PREVENTION - Safe-sex education and condom distribution programs can help. Strong epidemiological evidence suggests that circumcision can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV as much as 60%². (See www.who.int/hiv/topics/

malecircumcision/en/.) It is recommended that male infants be circumcised, so that, when sexually active, their risk of contracting and transmitting HIV will be greatly reduced.

Current drug regimens can dramatically suppress HIV in patients, but none of these agents can completely eliminate the virus.

Statistics from the World Health Organization:
Percentage of Population with HIV

U. S. 0.5 - 1%

Sub- Sahara Africa 6%

Middle East < 0.1%

Israel 0.1 - 0.5%

Global annual rate of death due to HIV= 2%

Ezra Seltzer

(1) Centers for Disease Control

(2) Scientific American - October 2008

University Health and Safety.net

universityhealthandsafety.net is a web site published and maintained by three CLTs as an independent source of safety and health information devoted to university personnel. Its content—documents and links— is important to those who work in labs and studios or who are environmental compliance professionals.

**BOOKMARK
THIS SITE**

A few documents may be familiar to CLTs. *The Fire Emergency, Lab Safety Guidelines* and *Fume Hood Safety* have been previously pub-

lished in hard copy. There's plenty of new info, too. *Asthma In The Workplace* and *Molds* are both necessary reads. There are also interesting links— OSHA and the American Chemical Society, of course, but then there's MSDS for Infectious Substances, Lab Worker Hazard Data Sheet and Institut de Recherche Robert-Sauvé en Santé et en Sécurité du Travail (IRSST).

A personal health and safety page is also available, meant for everyone, including nonprofessionals, students, family and friends. Here you'll find such topics as the ergonomics of texting (oh, those thumbs!), mousing and typing (oh, those wrists!), eye-glass safety and prevention of slips and falls.

Bookmark this site! It's valuable to you as a professional and as an individual.

Exercise at the Office

For many busy office-bound employees, sitting all day can cause a host of problems: back pain, muscle tightness, headaches, musculoskeletal problems, weight gain, depression, tension and decreased motivation. Office exercise may relieve or prevent many of the above complaints.

At Your Desk

If you feel too desk-bound during the day to get up and move, you can still stretch, strengthen your muscles and engage in short cardiovascular sessions right in your chair.

Hands and Wrists

- a) Extend fingers from closed fist, then clench your fist again. Do twenty repetitions.
- b) Touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of each finger in turn, making the circle as round as you can. Straighten your fingers in between, touching each other.

Neck

- a) Neck Push: Keeping your head upright, hold the palm of one hand against your forehead, and press your head forward, resisting with your palm. Hold ten to fifteen seconds. Now clasp your hands behind your head and press your head backwards, resisting with your hands. Hold for ten to fifteen seconds. Now hold your right hand against the side of your head, and press your head to the right, resisting with your hand again. Hold for ten to fifteen seconds. Then repeat on left side.
- b) Relax and Roll: Relax your shoulders and let your head roll forward, chin to chest. Slowly rotate your head in a circle without straining your neck. Repeat five times. Try not to raise your shoulders as you do the exercise.

Legs

- a) Sit On Air: Stand with your back against a wall, feet apart and about sixteen inches from the wall. Lower yourself into a seated position, keeping feet flat on the floor. Hold for fifteen to thirty seconds. Return to standing position

and relax for thirty seconds. Repeat three times. Do not bend your knees beyond a ninety degree angle.

- b) Calf Raise: Stand on one leg. Raise your heel, then lower it to the floor. Perform twenty repetitions for each leg.

Feet

Foot Clenching: While sitting, alternate extending and clenching your toes. Perform twenty repetitions.

Upper back and shoulders

Shoulder Rotations: Draw circles with your shoulders, as big as possible. Inhale and expand ribcage as shoulders are moving back. Do ten circles in one direction, then switch direction and do ten more.

Relieve/Prevent Several Complaints

Lower Back

- a) Spine Rotation: Sit with feet and hips planted solidly. Slowly turn your trunk clockwise and counterclockwise. Make sure your head moves with your torso. Perform for fifteen repetitions each side.
- b) Good Morning: Stand with your knees slightly bent and your arms akimbo. Keep your lower back arched. Bend at the waist. Do ten repetitions.

Buttocks

Sit in a chair or lie on your back with your knees bent. Tighten and squeeze your buttocks. Hold five to ten seconds and release. Repeat six to eight times. Really concentrate on the squeeze for maximum results.

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Exercise at the Office

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Back and Upper Body

Tummy Twist: Stand with your feet shoulder wide apart. Hold your bent elbows down at your sides with fists up. Lean slightly forward and twist side to side with your elbows leading the movement.

Repeat for thirty to forty five seconds. Do several times a day.

On the Job

1. Do the exercises in *At Your Desk* above.
2. Walk or bike to work if you can. If you take the bus or train, get off one stop earlier and walk.
3. Look for opportunities to stand. Eat lunch standing up.
4. Breaks: Take a brisk walk or short exercise period while at our desk.
5. If your job involves walking, do it faster.
6. Use the stairs whenever possible.

Climbing the stairs, running in place and taking brisk walks around the building are ways office employees can get their heart rates up.

References cited:

U. Cal. 16 Sep't., 2008-Deskercise.

Occupational Hazards, 10 January, 2008-Get in Shape at Your Desk

Mayo Clinic-Office Exercise-How to Burn Calories While You Work

Truman State U.-Exercises at Your Desk.

**Shelly Mendlinger
Ezra Seltzer**



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