

Outlook on Lifestyle

Prescribing levels of nurse abuse

DR. GOTT



PETER GOTT, M.D.

By Peter H. Gott, M.D.

Dr. Williams Emels, a specialist in obstetrics/gynecology, playfully sidled up behind Jean Kovel, a nurse sitting in the nurses' station in Colorado Springs Memorial Hospital. With a sly grin, he jerked the woman's ponytail and, according to the Associated Press, said: "Hey, babe, what's going on?"

Right now, Dr. Emels is fervently wishing that he had resisted this seductively friendly impulse.

Ms. Kovel was not amused. In fact, she was positively ticked off. The supposedly innocent tug gave her "excruciating" pain. The 31-year-old nurse charged the doctor with "assault, negligence and emotional distress." In an out-of-court settlement, she was

awarded \$65,000, paid by the surgeon's insurance company.

This case will unquestionably alter — irrevocably — doctor/nurse relations in all hospitals. Health-care institutions have just entered another era.

On the serious side, Dr. Emels's actions can certainly be viewed as deprecating. Sexism in the workplace is inappropriate. Many women, both inside and out of medicine, have had it up to here with male colleagues or employers who think it's cute to play unsolicited touchy-feely games with female employees. These women are completely justified in demanding to be treated with respect and equality. No woman should be expected to put up with mauling and condescension, particularly at her job, especially in situations where such behavior has been institutionalized, as it has been for years in hospitals.

On the other hand, \$65,000 for a pulled ponytail? Come on. I've seen stuff going on in my own hospital that would be worth \$100,000 or \$200,000 — maybe even more at the annual picnic.

In most hospitals, there is a degree of familiarity that comes with time between doctors and nurses. A

squeeze on the shoulder or an arm around the waist are commonplace. When inconsequential intimacy is exceeded, more than one nurse has been heard to exclaim: "Knock it off, doctor, I'm busy!" This usually serves to bring the situation in check, into proper balance.

Some nurses simply shed advances like water off a retriever; others bemoan the fact that, for one reason or another, they're seldom if ever tweaked. A few set the doctors straight on the spot, and that's that.

In the interests of resolving future similar incidents, I suggest the following guidelines for financial awards.

- arm around waist, without smile: \$45,000;
- with smile: \$47,000
- prolonged contact: \$52,000
- both arms: \$68,000
- touching hair: \$35,000
- stroking hair: \$37,000
- running fingers through hair: \$43,000
- blowing in ear, without smile: \$27,000;
- with smile: \$29,000;
- kissing neck: \$75,000
- biting neck: \$84,000

- hand holding: \$9,300
- touching dorsal spine: \$16,700
- tickling dorsal spine: \$16,900
- scratching lumbar spine: \$17,500
- kneading lumbar spine: \$19,900
- patting fanny: \$87,500

Admittedly, this list is incomplete for reasons of propriety. But I'm sure you get the idea.

Nurse Kovel is a firebrand, make no mistake about it. She discovered an unbeatable solution to nurses' demeaning low salaries. There's a rich vein to be mined out there, as long as interns, residents and aging narcissistic practitioners continue to ignore the philosophy of "look but don't touch."

Dyed garments discolor other wash

POLLY'S POINTERS



POLLY FISHER

By Polly Fisher

DEAR POLLY — I've been dyeing some shirts and blouses using the home dyes from the supermarket. My problem is that these dyes bleed when I wash the garment. Is there a way to prevent the dyes from discoloring the rest of my wash? — R.B.

DEAR R.B. — Home-dyed fabrics

will bleed a bit and fade the more they're washed. However, I've found that washing them in cold water protects and preserves the color best. Whenever I've washed home-dyed garments in warm water, white items in the load became tinted. This has not been such a problem, after a few washings, when I use cold water.

The best preventative for discolored whites is to always wash home-dyed clothing separately or with items of a like or darker color. You can also try to set the dye with salt — add a cup of salt to the rinse water when washing the item for the first time after dyeing it. This may minimize fading and bleeding to some degree.

Unfortunately, I've always found that home dyed-fabrics do fade after repeated washings. When this happens, you may want to re-dye them,

either in the original color or in some new, fresh color to enliven your wardrobe. However, remember that dyed fabric that is over-dyed with a different color will come out in a color that is a combination of the two: blue over a red dye will have a purplish cast, for example.

Have fun and good luck with your dyeing efforts! — POLLY

Polly's newsletter "Sewing and Needlework Tips and Timesavers" offers ways to make your sewing chores easier, plus ideas for easy craft and needlework projects. Send \$1 for each copy to POLLY'S POINTERS, in care of this newspaper, P.O. Box 93863, Cleveland, OH 44101-5863. Be sure to include the title.

DEAR POLLY — Must frozen corn on the cob be defrosted before cooking? — AMANDA

DEAR AMANDA — Some authorities recommend thawing home-frozen corn on the cob because they feel if it is cooked frozen, the kernels will overcook while the inside of the cob stays cold. In other words, it's difficult to get the frozen ears to cook evenly. However, I've found that simmering it gently in milk or water to which a little sugar has been added produces good-tasting results with a minimum of effort. Just cook it until it seems tender and to your liking. — POLLY

RECIPE OF THE WEEK: On a cold fall day, nothing beats a bowl of steaming hot soup — and the following recipe for Super Clam Chowder is as simple as opening a few cans.

Combine 1 can cream of celery soup, 1 can cream of potato soup, 1 can New England clam chowder, 5 ounces of canned whole, small baby clams with their liquid, and 1 cup half-and-half. Heat, stirring constantly, to just below the boiling point. Serve with oyster crackers on the side.

You'll find more delicious, easy and nutritious soup recipes in my newsletter "Hot and Hearty Soups." Send \$1 for each copy to POLLY'S POINTERS, in care of this newspaper, P.O. Box 93863, Cleveland, OH 44101-5863. Be sure to include the title. — POLLY

DEAR POLLY — For tasty, golden-brown baked chicken, cut 1 broiler-fryer chicken into serving pieces and season with salt and pepper. Top with a mixture of 1/2 cup honey and 1/2 cup orange juice. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 375 degrees for one hour or until done.

Try adding shredded carrots to tuna, chicken or turkey-salad sandwiches.

Also they give extra taste and nutrients to corned beef, ham and cheese, and peanut butter sandwiches.

A teaspoon of sugar added to onions before frying will improve the flavor. — BOBBIE

OUR LANGUAGE

by Jeffrey McQuain

To cover again or anew, you re-cover. Don't forget the hyphen, however, or re-cover won't be able to recover.

Paltry describes anything worthless or insultingly inferior. Never in-

sult a friend; if you can't spell paltry, let your pal try.

Q. When do you use ante- and when do you use anti-?

A. The prefix ante- means "before" or "in front of"; for instance, antedate occurs earlier in time. Anti- means "opposed to" or "against," as in anti-smoking.

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