

FROM OUR SCIENCE DUDE



Welcome to HappiLabs. What's up?



If you're new to HappiLabs, we are a research organization that studies scientists with the goal of **improving the quality of life of scientists**. The best way to study you is to listen. So that's what we do with our surveys, and these reports are a summary & discussion of the results.

One problem that inhibits the progress of science is the lack of transparency with the supplies you use. **What is a fair price? Which brand has better quality?** Based on your feedback, our reports will help other scientists make a better decision about which supplies to use.

But we don't stop at lab supplies. In this issue, new content includes tips for finding a job outside academia and suggestions for organizing your lab. Plus, your chance for a **free cup of coffee**.

By working together, **as a community**, we can identify and solve the problems that afflict the scientific community. Help us increase the number of scientists who take our surveys, send them to HappiLabs.org.

Thank you,

Tom the Science Dude

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Happiness Rating 3.9

On our December survey we asked, "On average, how do you feel about coming to work in your lab?"

RATING SCALE



5 = Extremely Happy

4

3 = Neither happy nor unhappy

2



1 = Extremely Unhappy

The above rating represents the overall average happiness of the HL community.
How can we improve this rating? See page 6

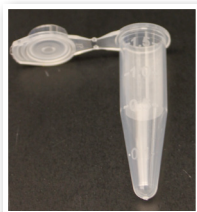
This report belongs to _____

Scientists around Chicago were surveyed about the price & quality of 1.5 ml microcentrifuge tubes and nitrile gloves, along with general feelings about life in a research lab. The following pages summarize our findings.

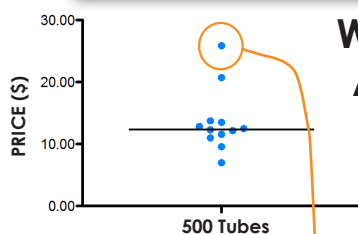
Is your lab **PAYING** too much for **1.5 ml Tubes**?

MEDIAN PRICE

\$12.30
Per 500 1.5 ml Tubes



11 labs provided us with their pricing for 1.5 ml tubes. When you purchase tubes again, double check that you're paying a price close to the median. If you want help receiving a quote or negotiating with a sales representative, **ask us for help: hello@happilabs.org**.



WHICH DOT ARE YOU?

Each dot represents the price paid by an individual lab. The bar represents the median price paid overall.

CASE STUDY – 1.5 ml Tubes

Let's focus on the highest outlier (circled in orange) on the graph above, Lab A. We asked them how many tubes they order per year, and based on their estimate they could be saving A LOT! Due to privacy policies, the identity of the lab will be kept confidential but they will be notified about their potential savings.

Price per 500 tubes
(1 pack)

Lab A Price: **\$25.90**

HappiLabs Median: **\$12.30**

Price Difference: **\$13.60**

Quantity Purchased Annually: **100**

ANNUAL SAVINGS = \$1,360

What would you buy with an extra \$1,400?

What are the **QUALITIES** of a good 1.5 ml Tube?

A high-quality 1.5 ml microcentrifuge tube is important for a successful experiment and quality data. Based on feedback from our community, there are 2 main features that scientists look for in a high-quality tube:

- **TIGHT SEAL** to prevent bursting or leaking while boiling, spinning, or freezing
- **CLARITY** helps for identifying pellets and sample

As we accumulate more reviews, we'll make it easy for you to identify which brands provide the highest-quality tube. The 'Overall Tube Rating' represents the average of all the ratings we received for 1.5 ml tubes.

Overall Tube Rating **4.4**

RATING SCALE

- 5 = Extremely Happy (Never a problem)
4
3 = Neither happy nor unhappy
2
1 = Extremely Unhappy (Frequent problems)

Only brands with at least 3 reviews ($n = 3$) will be reported. So far, only one brand qualifies — Axygen. Other rated brands ($n < 3$) include: Dot Scientific, MidSci, Eppendorf, Biologix, Genesee, Denville, Labsource, and ISC Bioexpress.

Reviews for the Most Used Brand **Axygen**

REVIEW	RATING
They have both options: sterile and bulk. Good for RNA/DNA work. After autoclave, also it is clear to see the tiny pellet	5
Don't burst when boiled & spun or when frozen & spun at high speeds	5
Boil proof. Water does not get through when sonicating	5
I like the big caps that they come with. Makes it easier to write on the tubes. Also, the tubes are very tough. They hold up well to chemicals and freezing/thawing	4
They are good clarity, seal well, lids do not pop, reasonable price	4
We buy pre-sterilized tubes and non-sterile tube from the same company. The pre-sterilized tubes are much harder to open	4
Axygen Tube Rating Overall	4.5

JOKE

Q: What do you call a tooth in a beaker of water?
A: See page 4.

Is your lab **PAYING** too much for **Nitrile Gloves**?

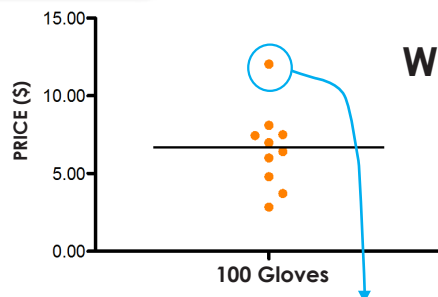
MEDIAN PRICE

\$6.70
Per 100 Gloves

11 labs provided us with their pricing for gloves. When you purchase gloves again, double check that you're paying a price close to the median. If you want help receiving a quote or negotiating with a sales representative, **ask us for help: hello@happilabs.org**.



* Pay attention! Gloves are sold in varying quantities per box (100, 200, 250, and 300/box)



WHICH DOT ARE YOU?

Each dot represents the price paid by an individual lab. The bar represents the median price paid overall.

CASE STUDY – Nitrile Gloves

Let's focus on the highest outlier of the graph above, Lab B. We asked them how many tubes they order per year, and based on their estimate they could be saving A LOT! Due to privacy policies, the identity of the lab will be kept confidential but they will be notified about their potential savings.

Price per 100 gloves

Lab B Price: **\$12.04**

HappiLabs Median: **\$6.70**

Price Difference: **\$5.34**

Quantity Purchased Annually: **40**

ANNUAL SAVINGS = \$214

What would you buy with an extra \$200?

JOKE ANSWER

A: A one molar solution. – Submitted by Leida (@LeidaMarieTL), PhD student from Northwestern

What are the **QUALITIES** of a good Nitrile Glove?

It's clear that scientists want a glove that doesn't rip often, has good grip, and feels comfortable. We asked scientists to rate the quality of their gloves on a 5-point scale, and to write a short review. As you search for gloves for your lab, use these ratings & reviews to help you make a better decision about which brand to use. The 'Overall Glove Rating' represents the average of all the ratings we received for Nitrile Gloves.

Overall Glove Rating **4.1**

RATING SCALE

- 5 = Extremely Happy (Never a problem)
- 4
- 3 = Neither happy nor unhappy
- 2
- 1 = Extremely Unhappy (Frequent problems)

Only brands with at least 3 reviews (n = 3) will be reported. So far, only one brand qualifies — Kimberly Clark. Other rated brands (n < 3) include: Microflex, Titan, VWR, Denville, Quest, Evolution One

Reviews for the Most Used Brand

→ **Kimberly-Clark**

REVIEW	RATING
Thin yet protective grip	5
I love these gloves!	5
Our lab really likes the purple nitrile because they are feel thicker than other brands and don't tear as often. I have tried to switch our lab to cheaper gloves, but the people get mad	4
Very comfortable gloves	4
Get Soap suds whenever spraying gloves with ethanol for sterilization	2
Kimberly-Clark Glove Rating Overall	4.0

PSST...

The more scientists that get involved, the more we can help each other. Refer a friend to sign up for future surveys at www.happilabs.org

Does an **ORGANIZED** Lab = A **HAPPY** Lab?

Every week HL emails a survey asking scientists to:

- Rate their happiness as a scientist (1-5 scale)
- Share something that makes you happy in the lab
- Share something that makes you unhappy in the lab

The blue sections of our reports will always focus on scientist's feedback from our weekly surveys. As a community we will identify problems in your labs and potential solutions.

One problem that is commonly mentioned is...



MESSY

LAB ORGANIZATION & ORDERING

"People put empty boxes back on the shelf. This makes it challenging to know when we are out of items"



"Not being aware that we are out of something...it would help to diminish the number of order emergencies"

"Lack of organization"

"The biggest problem in our lab overall is organization of supplies, books, shipping package inserts, etc."

Can we agree that a cleaner lab or office (or home) is easier on the mind? HappiLabs is here to help organize your lab. We asked scientists around Chicago for...

Tips from the **HL** Community



ORGANIZED

Place labels on every drawer & cabinet so when people put dishes, supplies, reagents, etc. away, they know where everything should go. — Kevin F. Lab Manager, The Field Museum

Utilize 'Google Docs' for reagent & supply ordering. It's easy for organizing product info, date of ordering, and receipt in the lab. And everyone can access it from their computer. — Maggie C., PhD student at Northwestern

Clean your desk before you leave every day. It all starts and expands from your desk. — Tom at HappiLabs

Are you **FRUSTRATED** with working in a lab?

A response from one of our surveys:

"I think the biggest reason for **unhappiness** in the lab for me is the fact that I just really don't enjoy science research anymore. I'm in grad school and I'm tired of it, I don't really care about my project, but I've been here for too long and I feel like I'm stuck with no other options."

How many of you share similar feelings? Life as a scientist is stressful — tight budgets, a limited reservoir of PhD jobs, and failed experiments. It's a perfect recipe for unhappiness. However, scientists are well-educated and there are more options aside from your current path. Our President and Founder, Tom Ruginis, felt the same way in 2008 when he deserted his PhD program after 2 years at UIC. He gave us 3 suggestions for transitioning to a job outside the lab:

- 1 Identify your skills** – You may lack experience, but not the skills. Working in a lab provides you plenty of talents that are cross-functional such as: project management, data analysis, time management, purchasing, budgeting, experiment design, writing/editing, and many more.
- 2 Talk to sales reps** – Pick their brain to find out what types of jobs are available and details about their job as well as other jobs within their company.
- 3 Believe in yourself** – probably the most important step. A transition may not be easy, but it will be worth it.

HL TRIVIA FOR COFFEE

Which **Chicago science** museum is home to this meteorite, named **Sutter's Mill**?



Email your guess to hello@happilabs.org. 2 winners will be randomly selected to **win a \$5 gift card** to the coffee shop of your choice.*

* Only available to Chicagoland scientists for now.

THANK YOU!

Fist Bumps for everyone who contributed to the publishing of this report:

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Copy Editor – Tracy Schmidt, PhD Candidate

Everything Else – Tom Ruginis, Science Dude

And SPECIAL thanks to all the scientists who have contributed data so far

STAY TUNED! In our next report...

- Pricing and quality reviews for **Pipette Tips** & **Conical Tubes**
- Tips for making your lab more green
- A new joke
- Are labs too noisy to work?

Join the  Community

SIGN UP for
future **surveys**
at **HappiLabs.org**

 @happilabs_org

Check out this new website to store & share data:

