

Job interview is perfect time to discuss salary and benefits

Dear Abby: My co-workers and I would like your opinion on the following question: Is it appropriate to ask about the salary during a job interview? Half of us say, "Yes. When better to ask what the pay will be?" Others say, "No, it's in poor taste." What do you think? — All Bets Are In

Dear All: Of course the subject of salary should be discussed during a job interview. Usually, when an interview is nearing its end, the interviewer will ask, "Do you have any questions?" If the topics of salary and benefits haven't come up before then, it's perfectly acceptable to inquire about them.

Dear Abby: My husband of more than 20 years decided that the grass was greener on the other side, and now I find myself on the dating scene again. I had breast reduction surgery, thinking I would be with my husband for the rest of my life. Now I don't know how to bring up the subject if I find a man with whom I want to be intimate.

I know a man should love me for who I am on the inside, but I can't help but feel that the scars I carry on the outside will make him turn and walk away. Not a day goes by that I don't regret having had the surgery, but there is nothing I can do about that now.



Jeanne Phillips
Syndicated advice columnist

Dear Abby

When do I tell the guy about my scars? I don't want this to get in the way of sharing my life with someone. — SCARED IN ARIZONA

Dear Scarred: Many women have had breast reductions — some for aesthetic reasons, but others because nature blessed them with such an overabundance of tissue that it was creating painful back and shoulder problems. The surgery is neither shocking nor particularly unusual.

The time to discuss it is when you have gotten to know someone well enough that you can talk frankly with him and explain that you feel self-conscious. No gentleman who cares about you will ever walk away. And any man who does, you are well rid of before investing your heart — or anything else — in him.

Dear Abby: My husband, "Rick," and I have been married 20 years. He's a veteran who is completely disabled. We live in a very secluded area. The nearest town is 60 miles away, and

I can't be gone long because of Rick's needs.

Abby, I'm lonely. My family lives in another state. Rick said years ago that we would move to where my family members are. But now he refuses because he doesn't want to leave his comfort zone.

Some days I am more down than others. Our home is on the market, but we won't be going far — just a bit closer to the town where Rick's family is. When I bring up the subject of missing my relatives, Rick gets angry so I don't say anything anymore. I long for my family — and for many other things as well. Could you share your feelings on this, please? — Nowhere in Montana

Dear Nowhere: Gladly. Because your husband refuses to move to where your family members are, keep your fingers crossed that it won't be too long before you find a buyer for your current home. Do move closer to his family. At least then you won't be so isolated. And once you're closer to his family, THEY can look out for him while you schedule some visits to your family. If you go a couple of times a year, it could make a big difference in your outlook.

— Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



YWCA stands against racism

Posted by Deborah Clark

Thousands of people from across the United States came together on April 30 to take a stand against racism.

To mark the event locally, the YWCA of Brunswick held a special program and poster signing at its Family Wellness Center, 144 Scranton Connector, Brunswick. Members of the community, YWCA board, foundation and membership gathered to hear a presentation by Dee C. Lubell, a St. Simons Island writer, dramatist and performer. She spoke on "Unlocking the Mind to Dialogue: Uncovering Denial of Racism." Following her talk, members of the Coastal Youth Theatre of Voices entertained and inspired the audience with their message of unity and social justice.

During the program, Brunswick Mayor Bryan Thompson presented a proclamation which urged "all residents to come together in unity to end racism, to stand together to let it be known that it



will not be tolerated in our community and to ensure that people of all cultures are able to live with peace and harmony within our boundaries."

Guests were invited to view an exhibit of Stand Against Racism posters and art work created by YWCA After School participants and to sign a poster featuring the Stand Against Racism pledge.

Several local organizations

joined the YWCA in taking a stand including the Robert Abbott Institute, the Baha'is of Brunswick, the Unitarian Universalist Church, the Boys and Girls Club and the Star Foundation.

Pictured from left, are Ann Granger, executive director of the YWCA of Brunswick; Pamela Rogers, Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia; and Dee C. Lubell, St. Simons Island writer and performer.

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Severe allergic reaction to drug is rare, but precaution advisable

Dear Dr. Gott: I am writing about something I have never seen addressed in your column before.

My daughter, who lives alone, took the first pill of a new prescription while at work. She went into anaphylactic shock. He co-workers immediately called an ambulance, and she got to the hospital with only minutes to spare. If she had waited and taken the pill at home, there would have been no one to help her. Please caution your readers to not take any new medication when they are alone just in case they have an allergic reaction.

Reader: Allergies to medications are fairly common, but to be severe enough to cause anaphylactic shock is rare.

Also known as anaphylaxis, this type of allergic reaction is severe and potentially life-threatening, typically occurring within minutes of exposure to the offending substance. In some instances, a reaction can occur within seconds or can take as long as 30 minutes. Unless treated immediately with epinephrine, the sufferer can become unconscious or die.

Everyone, particularly those people with known allergies, is at risk of anaphylaxis, but certain



Peter Gott
Syndicated medical columnist

medications, foods, food additives and insect stings are the most common triggers. In some instances, exercise, eating certain foods prior to the activity, or exercising in a vast variety of weather conditions can cause a reaction. Those who have had anaphylaxis in the past are at increased risk.

Symptoms include a weak, rapid pulse; dizziness or fainting; nausea; vomiting; diarrhea; skin reactions such as hives; itching or flushing; swelling of the tongue or throat; and constriction of the airways, leading to wheezing and difficulty breathing.

Treatment is by injection of epinephrine, which reduces the body's response to the allergen. Then oxygen, IV antihistamines and cortisone, steroid pills and/or beta agonists may be used to reduce throat constriction, ease or improve breathing and more. People with a history of anaphylaxis are often prescribed single-dose Epi-Pens by their primary-care physician or allergist for

self-injection at the first sign of a reaction, decreasing the risk of worsening symptoms.

Depending on the allergen, immunotherapy with allergy shots may be beneficial. This treatment involves receiving multiple injections of slowly increasing "doses" of the allergen. In this way, the body may develop immunity to the substance and stop over-reacting. This is not appropriate for everyone. Even in those who choose to undergo this treatment, taking steps to prevent a reaction -- and being prepared should one happen -- is still vital.

Your advice about starting a new medication only when others are around in case of an emergency is very good. Had your daughter been alone when she developed the reaction, she probably would not have fared as well as she did. The good news is that this type of reaction is rare, and most people do not need to be overly concerned. But, as always, it is better to play it safe, because there is no way of knowing what could happen. Thank you for writing and sharing this important issue.

— Write to Dr. Gott c/o United Media, 200 Madison Ave., Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10016

Cosmetic surgery divides family, but may boost teen's self-esteem

Dr. Wallace: I'm 14 and very self-conscious and shy because my nose is very large. It's out of proportion with the rest of my face. I "inherited" my nose from my father. I would really like to have plastic surgery to shorten it. My grandmother (mom's mom) took me to a plastic surgery doctor to see if he could successfully shorten my nose. After doing things to my nose, he said yes and gave my grandmother a price. She said that she would pay for the operation and I could have it done early this summer. This would be perfect because my father is being transferred to Detroit on July 31. By that time, my nose would be healed and I would then have a "new look."

I want this operation. My mother is all for it, but my father isn't so sure. He keeps telling me that I should be proud of my nose because it is a part of our physical heritage. I would be just as proud of my heritage with a "normal" shaped nose. This early summer would be the perfect time to have the operation. I'm positive the operation would provide me with greater self-esteem. I hate having my picture taken



Robert Wallace
Syndicated advice columnist

Between 12 & 20

now. Both parents know that I'm writing to you asking for your opinion. They both will be eager to get your answer. — Nameless, Phoenix.

Nameless: Since you're suffering emotionally because of your physical appearance and the "problem" can be safely corrected, cosmetic surgery is a completely reasonable option. I'm all for it! Grandmother gets hugs and kisses for her generous gift of a "new" nose and a boost in your self-image.

Dr. Wallace: I'll be spending time at the beach this summer and I always wear a sunscreen to avoid sunburns. When I purchase sunscreen, I have to select one from a group with different SPF. What exactly does this mean? — Cynthia, Gary, Ind.

Cynthia: SPF is short for sun protection factor. The SPF rating helps determine the amount of

time you can spend in the sun safely. For example, a sunscreen with an SPF of 10 allows you to stay in the sun approximately 10 times longer without burning than if you weren't wearing any sunscreen. The higher the number, the greater the protection.

Dr. Wallace: My brother told me never to give a pet to an animal shelter because if the pet is not cute, it's not given to a new home. The pet is put to sleep. This is really cruel. If I had a pet I didn't want or couldn't keep, I would just drop it off somewhere else, hoping that someone would adopt it. That's better than having it killed. — Nan, Mobile, Ala.

Nan: Your brother is mistaken. Animal shelters do not kill animals. They do all in their power to give them food and medical treatment and to find them a good home. A pet should never simply be dropped off in a random neighborhood because it's not wanted. It won't be adopted. It will become a stray. The life of a stray is usually very short and miserable.

— Write to Dr. Wallace at rw Wallace@galesburg.net.