

Unchained Labs Sets the Hook on Automated Buffer Exchange with Lil' Tuna

July 7, 2026 — Pleasanton, CA — [Unchained Labs](#), the life sciences company that's all about getting biologics and gene therapy researchers the right tool for the job, launched [Lil' Tuna](#) today, the first fully automated, plate-based, benchtop buffer exchange system. Unchained's been automating buffer exchange forever — with Big Tuna for plate exchanges and Unagi for walk-up processing of individual samples. Lil' Tuna packs the best of both systems into one simple, compact, high-throughput buffer exchange platform perfect for every lab, at every scale.

Buffer exchange and sample concentration are some of the most time-consuming, manual steps standing between researchers and the science they want to do. Traditional approaches using dialysis, centrifugation or cartridge-based filtration require constant intervention and are super hard to automate when going into screening mode. Teams using these methods are forced to micromanage a step that demands way too much of their attention and throttles throughput.

Lil' Tuna uses the same exact pressure-based UF/DF approach and consumables as Big Tuna and Unagi — processing 96- or 24-well plates for maximum throughput, handling one-off samples on the fly, and delivering recoveries $\geq 96\%$. For labs all in on automation, Lil' Tuna fits right in with API software, automation-friendly template importing and a sample stage designed for easy robotic access. It integrates directly with Stuntman, Unchained's AI-driven automation platform, for seamless handoff into formulation screening, stability characterization and other downstream workflows.

"Buffer exchange has always been one of those steps that kills a scientist's momentum," said Krystin Schmidt, VP Marketing, Unchained Labs. "Lil' Tuna fully automates the whole thing so researchers can finally stop babysitting their buffer exchange. Its compact footprint and automation-ready design make it a perfect fit for the next generation of AI-enabled labs."

About Unchained Labs

Here's the deal. We're all about helping biologics and gene therapy researchers break free from tools that just don't cut it. Unleashing problem-tackling solutions and AI-driven automation that make a huge difference in the real science they do every day. That's our mantra, our promise, and we own it. We're located in Pleasanton, CA and can be found online at www.unchainedlabs.com.

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