Tired of camouflaging your excessive sweating?

3% of men and women suffer from excessive sweating, a medical condition with adapted solutions.
Sweating is a normal and essential function that helps your body stay cool. In fact, sweating is the body’s natural way of regulating temperature. This is why when it’s hot outside, people sweat more. There are situations where people can sweat more, for instance during exercise, or when feeling nervous, angry, embarrassed, or afraid.

Sweating is a normal function of the body

Sweat is produced by sweat glands. The majority of them are found in large numbers on the soles of the feet, palms, forehead, and armpits. This is why sweat is common in these areas.

DID YOU KNOW THAT

there are approximately 3 million sweat glands distributed all over your body?

Excessive sweating is a medical condition called hyperhidrosis, in which a person sweats excessively and unpredictably. People who suffer from hyperhidrosis sweat even under unexpected conditions, for example, in an air-conditioned room, or when they are resting.

There are two forms of hyperhidrosis:

- **Primary hyperhidrosis** which seems to be caused by an overstimulation of the sweat glands, in the absence of a sweating trigger.

- **Secondary hyperhidrosis** which is caused by an underlying condition such as an infection, cancer, medication, or a neurological disorder.

Primary hyperhidrosis is a relatively common and treatable condition

Primary hyperhidrosis is a common condition that affects nearly 3% of the population. Typically, it starts in adolescence in often healthy people. Primary hyperhidrosis is usually localized to specific areas such as armpits, palms, soles and the face. Sometimes sweating can be generalized, involving the entire body; but this is usually the result of an underlying condition, such as an infection, or medication. Although the exact causes of primary hyperhidrosis are not clear, the overstimulation of the sweat glands by a natural molecule named acetylcholine is involved.

Often people feel embarrassed or ashamed about excessive sweating. There is no need to feel that way, this is a condition that can be treated.

Talking to a doctor is important. Through a complete clinical examination, your doctor will tell you if you suffer from primary or secondary hyperhidrosis.

How to know if you have excessive sweating?

Sweating more than other people when exercising or because it is hot outside does not mean that you have primary hyperhidrosis. To help you decide if you should see a doctor for a medical diagnosis, here is some practical information.

You could likely suffer from hyperhidrosis if you:

1. Excessively sweat for no reason
2. Change your clothes more than once a day
3. Use antiperspirants, towels, powders or other to manage excessive sweating
4. Feel worried, embarrassed, ashamed or sad by your sweating
5. Feel your daily activities are limited because of excessive sweating

Simple tests that measure the amount of sweat production are available. Your doctor can perform these tests easily in their office.

Excessive sweating has a major impact on quality of life

People affected with excessive sweating also suffer from social problems, restrictions in daily activities and emotional impairments. Often, many feel unhappy and depressed, avoiding visits to their doctor for treatment. Excessive sweating can make you unhappy; but you don’t have to suffer in silence! Solutions exist. Talk to your doctor.

What are your treatment options?

Excessive sweating is not fatal! And the good news is that treatment options exist! To know more, talk to your doctor about your options and which treatment may be right for you.

There are different solutions available\(^1\),\(^2\):

**Antiperspirants**

Antiperspirants act by blocking sweat ducts. They usually contain aluminum salts at concentrations of 15% up to 25%. They need to be applied everyday.

**Sweat blocking agent**

Blocking agent is injected intradermally and inhibits the release of acetylcholine from the nerve. This causes a local blockade of sweat gland stimulation, thereby stopping sweat production. Treatments must usually be repeated 1 to 2 times per year.

**Iontophoresis**

Iontophoresis involves passing low level electrical impulses through the skin. In general, treatments must be repeated 3-4 times per week.

**Surgery**

Surgery is usually reserved for severe cases after other treatment options have failed. Cutting a nerve in the chest that triggers excessive sweating, liposuction or removal of the sweat glands under the armpits are all surgical options.

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Some practical tips

Underarm sweat pads
Placed under a t-shirt, can help to absorb underarm moisture.

Emollient washes and moisturisers
It’s better not to use soap-based products as these may worsen your condition. Instead use an emollient wash, available from any pharmacist.

Control your anxiety
Try to recognize your anxiety trigger factors such as large crowds, rushing about, spicy foods and hot or caffeinated drinks.

Choose the right clothing
Preferably choose clothing that is at least 80% cotton, linen or wool. Soft and breathable fabric allows air to circulate. Black, white or patterned clothing can help conceal sweat patches.

Happy feet
A great solution for sweaty feet is terrycloth insoles for shoes, a fabric made of small loops that absorb excess sweat and slips easily into any shoe.

It’s always very awkward, especially when you go to shake hands or pick something up and you are sweating profusely. Even if you have prepared everything for an important meeting and you feel great, when your sweating starts, it can be a real buzz-kill, but I have learnt to control my anxiety.

I am getting married in June and have so many things to think about, even holding my husband’s hands at the alter is starting to make me nervous. I had never been to a dermatologist but I decided to go in advance of my wedding. They told me about Botulinum injections which could work for my hands, so that’s something I would look into as an option.

Let’s hear from people like you
If you decide to see a doctor for your hyperhidrosis, preparing for your visit is an important step. Take some time to think it through. If you feel that you may be too embarrassed to face your doctor on your own, it is okay to bring someone with you.

1. Prepare your questions in advance so that you get all the information you need during your consultation. You may also want to write down the answers so you can read them on your own time when you get home.

2. If you have used any treatment in the past, remember to write it down and bring the list with you. Your doctor will want to know your treatment history. Also try to remember which treatment worked and which did not.

3. Be honest and open, do not feel embarrassed. Your doctor is there to listen and help. For instance your doctor will want to know how your excessive sweating is impacting your life. So try to think about situations (intimate, work, social) that are the most affected.

4. Give your doctor as much information as you can, even the smallest details. By telling the full picture, your doctor will be able to better diagnose and treat you if necessary. For instance, your doctor will want to know when your sweating started.

5. Do not hesitate to ask questions about the different types of treatment options available, as there may be a solution for you.

For more information and tips visit less-sweating.com
Do’s & Don’ts

Do talk to your doctor about excess sweating if it interferes with your everyday activities.

Do explore all the treatment options as there may be something you haven’t thought of yet.

Do choose clothes, shoes, socks and gloves made of natural fabrics.

Do look at the weather forecast and plan appropriate clothing for the next day.

Do look for ways to control your stress and anxiety.

Do talk to someone; a friend, a family member or colleague. It may help.

Don’t buy clothing with synthetic or manmade fabrics for areas where you sweat.

Don’t wear tight clothes as these reduce the ability of your skin to breathe.

Don’t let your excess sweating get you down or reduce your motivation.

Don’t suffer alone, talk to your friends or family about your sweating.

Don’t feel ashamed or embarrassed. Hyperhidrosis is a medical condition, solutions exist.

Consult your doctor and visit less-sweating.com