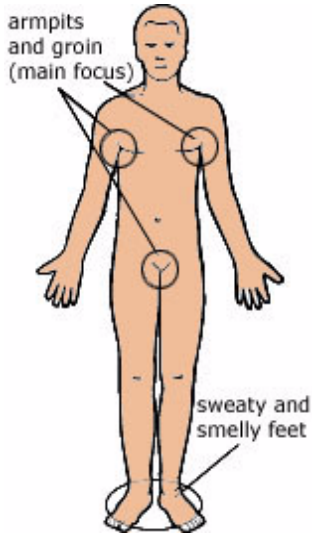


Body odour

Body odour is an unpleasant smell that is a social embarrassment for many people.

What causes body odour?

It is usually caused by a combination of inadequate or incorrect attention to personal hygiene and excessive perspiration from the armpits and groin. The old saying 'Make sure you do an APC (armpits and crotch) wash' is sound advice. Certain types of bacteria that are present on our skin can cause a strong odour in some people who perspire heavily.



Common types of body odour

What medical conditions cause body odour?

Body odour can be caused by an infection in the vagina, by kidney failure or by taking certain social drugs such as marijuana.

What is the treatment?

There are many ways to manage body odour and come up 'smelling like a rose'.

Scrubbing the body

Thoroughly scrub the body, especially the armpits and groin, with water and a deodorant soap. A good deodorant soap is pine soap. It is preferable to scrub morning and night under the shower, since the sweat glands and bacteria are active day and night. If the soap is not working, use an antibacterial surgical scrub (which your pharmacist can supply).

Choose suitable clothes

Choose natural fabrics such as cotton and wool that absorb perspiration better than synthetics. They also allow better evaporation of the sweat from the fabric.

Keep your clothes fresh

Regular washing of clothes is important. Using the same underwear for up to seven days is a certain way to cause bad smells, so change each day, especially in the summer months. A daily change of your shirt or blouse is also advisable and regular laundering or dry-cleaning of stale coats, trousers and skirts is essential.

Underarm antiperspirant deodorants

Ask your pharmacist for the most suitable antiperspirant deodorant. Do not use a deodorant only.

Dietary advice

It is important to watch what you eat, as some foods contribute to body odour. Avoid or reduce the intake of garlic, fish, curry, onions and asparagus. Reduce your intake of caffeine (coffee, tea and cola drinks), which stimulates sweat activity.

Care of smelly feet

If your feet are sweaty and smelly, make sure that you change your socks (should be cotton or woollen) regularly. Use shoe liners such as Odor eaters or charcoal inner soles. Also use a special solution such as Driclor or Hidrosol or the new preparation Neat Feet.

Shaving hair under the arms

Shaving the hair from the armpits is certainly essential in women with a body odour problem.

Surgery

If you perspire heavily from the armpits, the sweat glands can be surgically removed by a simple procedure called *axillary wedge resection*. Ask your doctor to arrange this if necessary.

Desperate measures

If all else fails, you can try the 'old skunked dog trick' by taking a bath in dilute tomato juice. Pour 2 cups of tomato juice in your bath water and sit in it for 15 minutes before scrubbing with a deodorant soap. This is reported to be very effective.