Body Odour Cleanse - I

Body odour is a major concern for most people today. It is unpleasant, embarrassing and reduces our confidence. A person who has body odour cannot help but be preoccupied with a nagging doubt whenever he or she is in the company of others.

**Causes of Body Odour**

The eccrine glands, also known as sweat glands, are located on almost every part of the body, produce body-cooling sweat that's mostly water. The number of sweat glands in a person's body can vary from around 2 million to more than 4 million. It is nature's little air conditioning system.

Similarly, the apocrine glands, which are located in the armpits and in the groin (among other areas), produce sweat that performs a number of functions, such as secretion of pheromones or mate attracting hormones, waste removal system that offloads microscopic bits of fat and other matter. The bacteria break down sweat into aromatic fatty acids, which produce the unpleasant odour. Medical conditions, such as thyroid disease and carcinoid syndrome, can also cause excessive sweating, as can the side-effects of some medicines such as anti-depressants.
Body Odour Cleanse - II

Many products, concoctions and remedies are offered in the market to try and solve the body odour problem. Some simply mask the odour while others, such as antiperspirants, try to get at the root cause of the problem, by blocking the skin pores that secrete sweat. This stops the odour but makes you feel dry. However, this method defeats your body’s natural cooling and toxin removal mechanism and it may cause some discomfort or even allergies.

The body odour can be tackled by:

- Reducing the amount of sweat and/or
- Treating the bacteria that produce the odour.

To keep body odour at bay, cleanse your body externally as well as internally through bathing and washing the body as well as through balanced diet and opting for a healthy lifestyle.

External Body Cleanse

- It is very important to bathe on a daily basis especially in a warm, dusty and humid country like India. It is advisable to take a second shower before going to bed. Use a mild soap for bathing. Unscented homeopathic soaps are the best. Avoid using deodorant soaps, since they are not only harsh to the skin but they also encourage the growth of resistant bacteria. Use a loofah sponge to thoroughly scrub bacteria away from your body.

- Baking soda is an effective, natural and economical deodorant. Rub a good amount in your armpits after you towel yourself dry. If you want to add some scent, mix some baby powder. If you want to feel extra dry, you can also add some corn starch.

- Slice a potato and clean your armpits using it. After drying your underarms, apply talcum powder on them.
• Apply lemon juice on your underarms after you get out of the shower.
• Apple Cider Vinegar can be applied directly onto the armpits to prevent excessive sweating.
• Take 2 teaspoons of vinegar and 2 teaspoons of honey on an empty stomach 3 times a day till the foul body odour disappears.

Internal Body Cleanse

• Water is a good cleansing agent; it helps to flush out unwanted toxins from our bodies and keeps body temperatures down to manageable levels. Start your day with a glass or two of fresh clean water. Strive to drink the usual norm of twelve glasses a day.
• Drinking tomato juice is an effective cure for excessive sweating. Drinking a glass of tomato juice daily early in the morning for one week should yield good results. After the first week is over, continue drinking the tomato juice every other day and then only as needed.

Dos and Don’ts

• Wear natural fabrics, such as cotton, which are absorbent and allow the sweat to be drawn away from your skin and allow your skin to breathe. Wear cotton clothes and no undergarments, particularly while sleeping. This particularly improves the quality of sleep.
• There are some foods that can contribute to body odours. Strive for a diet that is more alkaline than acidic. Reduce meats, fats, alcohol, spices, sugar intake and eat more fibre rich foods, especially fruits and vegetables. Hot foods like red peppers can make you moist. Avoid garlic and onions. The sulphur compounds in garlic and onions can make your sweat more aromatic than it would be otherwise, especially if you consume them in large quantities. The same goes for pungent spices.
• Daily elimination helps your body to remove harmful waste substances that will make you sick and cause undesirable body odour.
• Anger, anxiety and excitement increase sweat production. Consider learning and practicing techniques like meditation and visualization that can help you keep your cool under stressful circumstances.
Smoking can make you smell bad. When you inhale, smoke enters your lungs and works its way through your system. Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals and chemical compounds. Some are destroying your insides, while others are eventually expelled through your skin. When you quit smoking, your body smells better and you'll live longer, for sure.

Medical management of body odour

- Get an antibacterial and antiseptic solution called chlorhexidine (confirm) 0.05% from pharmacies. When applied daily, it significantly reduces the number of bacteria, although it has no effect on sweating itself.

- Get 20% aluminium chloride solution from medical store and apply it to your armpits, feet etc. before going to bed each night. This is because sweating stops when you sleep, so the solution will be more effective. The liquid gets into the openings of the sweat glands causing them to swell up and block. Wash it off in the morning and reapply again at bedtime. Use the product every night to start with and then gradually reduce it as you stop sweating to every other night or once or twice a week.

Surgical management of body odour

There are a couple of surgical options for severe sweating (hyperhidrosis) which can't be controlled medically. Beware of the after-effects of surgery before deciding upon it as these surgeries cannot be reversed.

- **Liposuction and removal of the skin of the armpit**
  
  In this process, small piece of skin in the apex of the armpit, measuring 4 cm by 1.5 cm is cut out, destroying the most troublesome sweat glands.

  A modern variation on this procedure is liposuction to suck out the sweat glands from the deeper layers of skin.

- **Trans-thoracic Sympathectomy**
  
  This surgery is done under general anaesthetic and uses keyhole surgery to destroy the nerves that control sweating.

  The surgeon makes an incision in your armpit and passes an electrical current to kill off the nerves.

  The success rate is about 40 per cent but because the body still has to sweat, some people experience increased sweating from their chest, abdomen and back after the operation.
• **Botox**

  Botox is only licensed as a treatment for excessive sweating from the armpit (axillary hyperhidrosis), so it can't be used for sweaty hands and feet.

  A small amount of the toxin is injected into multiple sites in the skin at the apex of the armpit. Although the results only last between four and nine months, it's an effective and safe treatment.

**Summary**