

## Stop Sweating with Acupuncture

Excessive sweating can make a handshake an embarrassing and dreaded event. It can make wearing shoes without socks inconceivable and changing bed sheets in the middle of the night normal occurrence. While sweating is natural and healthy, excessive perspiration, known as hyperhidrosis, affects over three percent of the population and can cause great distress. Acupuncture and Chinese medicine are extremely successful in the treatment of sweating. In fact, how one sweats is a key factor in identifying disharmony within the body. Sweat is considered a fundamental substance in Chinese medical text and is studied in-depth. While sweating disorders can be treated with surgery and drugs, it is worthwhile to know that there is an alternative to invasive and often risky procedures and medications.

### What is Hyperhidrosis?

Hyperhidrosis is defined as the production of perspiration beyond what is necessary to cool the body. When it is primary hyperhidrosis, the cause is unknown. The problem had been related to an over reaction of the sweat glands to both changes in temperatures and to physical and emotional stress. Hyperhidrosis can affect the feet, palms, underarms or the whole body.

Secondary hyperhidrosis has a recognized cause such as:

- Over-active thyroid gland

- Spinal Cord Injury
- Panic Attack
- Anxiety Disorder
- Some Caners
- Obesity
- Menopause

**Sweating and Traditional Chinese Medicine.**

Before acupuncture and herbal treatment can begin, it is necessary to correct diagnose the disease.

Sweating is a symptom for many different patterns of disharmony within the body. Oriental Medicine aims to treat each individual uniquely depending on their pattern and symptoms.

Your Acupuncturist may do an interview and ask you questions about how, what, where and when you perspire, sleep, eat, drink and exercise, to name a few. The practitioner may also feel the pulse and observe the tongue. This interview and physical examination will help create a treatment plan specifically for you.

**What Points Are Used?**

Each patient is custom-treated according to his or her specific and unique diagnosis. Acupuncture and Chinese will rarely treat the symptom of sweating directly. There are, however a few “symptomatic points” that are often used in combination for sweating. LI-4, K-7 for spontaneous sweating. Would be used in combination to regulate energy (QI) throughout the body, clear dampness and calm the nervous system. SI-3 for night sweats. Additional points from the Ear and Heart Meridian could be used as well.

#### What Lifestyle and Dietary Changes Should I Make?

You can do a number of things on your own to reduce sweating and body odor. The following suggested may help:

- Bathe daily.

Regular bathing helps keep the number of bacteria on your skin in check.

- Try relaxation techniques.

Consider relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation or biofeedback. These can help you learn to control the stress that triggers perspiration.

- Change your diet.

If foods or beverages cause you to sweat more than usual or your perspiration to smell, consider elimination caffeinated

drinks from your diet as well as foods with strong odors, such as garlic and onions.

- Choose natural-fiber clothing.

Wear natural fabrics, such as cotton, wool and silk, which allow your skin to breathe. When you exercise, you might prefer a high-tech fabric that keeps moisture away from your skin.

- Apply antiperspirants nightly.

At bedtime, apply antiperspirants to swat palms or soles of the feet. Try perfume-free antiperspirants.

- Dry your feet thoroughly after you bathe.

Microorganisms thrive in the damp spaces between your toes. Use OTC foot powders to help absorb sweat.

- Choose shoes and socks made of natural materials.

Shoes made of natural materials, such as leather, can help prevent sweaty feet by allowing your feet to breathe.

- Rotate your shoes.

Shoes won't completely dry overnight, so try not to wear the same pair two days in a row if you have trouble with sweaty feet.

- Wear the right sock.

Cotton and wool socks help keep your feet dry because they absorb moisture. When you're active, moisture-wicking athletic socks are a good choice.

- Change your socks often.

Change socks or hose once or twice a day, drying your feet thoroughly each time. Women may try pantyhose with cotton soles.

- Air your feet.

Go barefoot when you can, or at least slip out of your shoes now and then.