

# Why Does Body Odor Occur And How To Get Rid Of It Naturally?

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Body odor is a common issue known to affect the quality of life of the affected person. It is not uncommon for men and women to feel embarrassed about body odor. It can not just make them feel anxious about meeting people and even lower their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Most people prefer to use perfumes and deodorants to avoid body odor. However, perfumes and deodorants can only mask body odor and not eliminate it. The long-lasting and more effective strategy to avoid body odor would be to find why it occurs and eliminates its root causes.

Here is a brief discussion about the common causes of body odor and the best natural way to avoid it.

## What is body odor?

Body odor refers to the natural smell originating from a person. However, the term is more commonly used to refer to the 'bad' odor coming from a person that is believed to be due to excessive sweating.

However, excessive sweating is not always the primary cause of body odor. It usually occurs when the bacteria on the skin break down certain protein molecules in sweat, producing an odor in the process.

What makes body odor a particularly embarrassing symptom is it is often considered to be a sign of lack of personal hygiene. However, in most cases, body odor occurs due to the presence of a more serious underlying condition affecting the vital organs such as the skin or kidneys. [1]

For example; body odor that becomes more evident at puberty could be due to the fluctuations in the levels of hormones due to which the sweat glands in the skin become more active during this phase. Some patients with obesity and diabetes are also more prone to have body odor. [2]

Body odor is likely to occur in some specific parts of the body such as:

- Armpits
- Scalp
- Feet
- Groin

- Bellybutton
- Behind the ears
- Pubic region

## How does one get body odor?

The foods you eat, environmental factors such as a rise in external temperature, and increased humidity, medications you use, changes in hormonal levels, and certain underlying disorders could be responsible for causing body odor.

Let us have a look at the common causes of body odor.

## Increased sweating

The rapid multiplication of bacteria in the skin and the breakdown of sweat by bacteria resulting in the release of acids can cause unpleasant body odor. This means the more you sweat, the more likely you would have a bad body odor!

For example; people who work out in the gym for long hours are likely to sweat more due to which they often have an unpleasant body odor.

## Diet

The foods you eat may sometimes cause temporary changes in your body odor. For example, an excessive intake of meat continuously for a few days may cause body odor in some people.

However, body odor linked to such food habits or changes in the diet tends to disappear spontaneously once the intake of meat is reduced or stopped.

The overall diet of a person can also affect body odor. Some research studies have revealed that males who consume a healthy diet comprising fruits and vegetables are less likely to suffer from unpleasant body odor than those whose diet comprises junk foods, especially high-fat, fried foods.

Other research studies have also suggested that increased meat consumption may produce a negative impact on your body odor, while a plant-based diet may produce a positive impact.

[\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#)

A higher intake of carbohydrates is also associated with unpleasant body odor.

Bad body odor, as well as bad breath, may also occur due to the consumption of foods, having strong flavors such as garlic, onions, spices, and radish.

The findings of these studies have suggested that making healthy changes in your diet, reducing your intake of meat and high carb, high fats foods, and replacing them with fresh fruit and veggies could provide an effective way to avoid body odor.

## **Mental stress**

Mental stress and anxiety can cause you to sweat more, due to which you may develop a stronger body odor.

People, who suffer from hyperhidrosis disorder, tend to sweat uncontrollably and profusely, often for no apparent reason. Hyperhidrosis can be hereditary, passed on to a child from the mother or father.

However, in most cases, it occurs due to an underlying health condition such as diabetes or depression, and the side effects of certain medications.

One research study has linked hyperhidrosis to mental stress. The findings of this study have revealed that people who experience immense mental stress are prone to develop hyperhidrosis, which, in turn, can affect their self-esteem and confidence. [5]

These symptoms can further contribute to their anxiety thus creating a vicious cycle. One of the best ways to break this cycle is to adopt strategies to relieve stress and anxiety.

## **Diabetes**

The sharp rise in the blood sugar levels in patients with diabetes may lead to a complication called diabetic ketoacidosis. Diabetic ketoacidosis occurs due to the build-up of ketones in the body to a dangerous level.

The accumulation of ketone bodies could lead to a characteristic fruity body odor and breath.

One of the best ways to avoid body odor caused due to diabetic ketoacidosis is to monitor your blood sugar levels on a regular basis and follow appropriate treatment and dietary habits to achieve optimum glycemic control.

## **Menstruation**

Research studies have found that women tend to have a unique body odor that is perceived to be attractive to men during the fertile window of their menstrual cycle. [6]

The change in the body odor during the fertile period could be attributed to the hormonal changes occurring during this phase. It should be noted that the smell may not necessarily be pleasant or unpleasant; but just different.

## **Skin and vaginal infections**

Infections in the skin and vagina may cause unpleasant body odor. Fungal infections affecting these tissues are typically accompanied by redness, itching, and burning.

Some common skin infections that are known to cause bad body odor include:

- Trichomycosis axillaris, a type of bacterial infection affecting the hair follicles in the armpits
- A superficial bacterial skin infection called erythrasma
- A rash in a skinfold called intertrigo that often becomes odorous in the presence of a secondary superimposed infection like candidiasis (fungal infection)

## **Athlete's foot**

Athlete's foot can be the cause of sudden bad odor coming from the feet. Bad odor caused due to athlete's foot is often accompanied by itching, redness, and rashes.

It is more common in patients with uncontrolled diabetes.

Practicing healthy foot hygiene habits, wearing clean and dry footwear, and monitoring your blood sugar levels are effective ways to prevent body odor caused due to athlete's foot.

## **Cancer**

It is surprising to note that advanced cancer could be one of the possible causes of unpleasant body odor. It typically occurs due to an infected wound in the tissues affected by cancerous changes. [7]

## **Vitamin and mineral deficiencies**

Vitamin and mineral deficiencies caused due to an inadequate diet or malabsorption syndrome can sometimes cause body odor. Deficiencies of vitamin C and zinc are the common causes of increased secretion of sweat that smells foul or putrid.

## **How does bad odor affect you and why should you treat it?**

Bad odor is often a sign of an underlying condition and not a disease in itself. This is why; it is important to identify the root cause of bad odor so that the underlying condition responsible for it can be detected and treated.

Moreover, a bad odor can create a sense of embarrassment for people of all ages and genders. It can make them feel more anxious and stressed out, especially when they have to meet new people.

Bad odor can also affect the overall impression created by a person as it is commonly perceived as the lack of personal hygiene by others. This can prevent the person from achieving success in his or her career and even affect their personal relationships. [8]

If not managed in an appropriate and timely manner, bad body odor may reduce the self-esteem and self-confidence of a person putting him or her at risk of depression.

This marks the need to address body odor and adopt healthier ways to avoid it. It is important to identify the root cause of body odor and seek appropriate treatment to derive long-lasting results.

## **What are the best ways to reduce body odor?**

As discussed earlier, some medical conditions can affect how much a person sweats and the odor the sweat produces.

Bad body odor could be a sign of a serious condition. Hence, it is important to see your doctor and get yourself checked so that the exact cause of this symptom can be detected.

A person should visit a doctor if the increase in sweating usually occurs at night or when the bouts of sweating occur irregularly and at excessive levels.

Experiencing cold sweats or sudden changes in the sweating pattern are also some reasons you should visit a doctor to find the underlying cause and avoid serious complications.

## **Can diet and exercise help to reduce body odor?**

Some foods are known to contribute to unpleasant body odor.

For example, garlic and onions have an aroma that may come out through the pores of your skin when you sweat causing body odor. Alcohol and caffeinated beverages can also cause you to sweat more.

Hence, it is advisable to watch out your diet and find foods that could be responsible for causing bad odor.

Similarly, exercise may contribute to body odor by increasing how much you sweat. Increasing your water intake before and after your workout sessions may help to reduce body odor in this case.

## Natural health supplements and ingredients to reduce body odor

### Zinc

The deficiency of zinc is commonly linked to body odor. The use of supplements that contain zinc would replenish the levels of this nutrient in your body and help you get rid of body odor. [9]

### Agaricus Bisporus and Psyllium Powder

Agaricus bisporus and psyllium powder possess a natural anti-diabetic potential that could help you avoid the common causes of body odor like diabetic ketoacidosis, skin infections, and athlete's foot.

These herbs would also promote the functions of the kidneys and liver thus supporting the elimination of toxins from the body responsible for causing body odor. [10]

### Chlorophyllin

Chlorophyllin would help reduce body odor by acting on the skin and modifying the activities of the sweat glands. Chlorophyllin, along with Sage extract, would also help to destroy bacteria in the skin thereby preventing unpleasant body odor caused due to infections and the breakdown of sweat by these pathogens.

### Clove extract

The use of pleasant-smelling herbs and spices such as Clove, Parsley, and Peppermint in your diet or in the form of supplements could provide significant relief from body odor. The pleasant and soothing aroma of these ingredients would also help you feel fresh and confident and reduce anxiety and embarrassment caused due to body odor.

### Natural vs. modern drugs

Natural supplements containing a combination of these herbs would provide more effective and lasting relief from body odor than modern drugs that only help to suppress sweating.

Herbal remedies possess a natural ability to reduce body odor by eliminating the root cause and restoring healthy bodily functions.

The modern treatments, on the other hand, are aimed at reducing sweat production, which may result in serious long-term complications.

Hence, it is advisable to choose natural supplements to avoid body odor and its impact on your physical and emotional health.

## Conclusion

Body odor and excessive sweating are often the indicators of an underlying health condition. The use of natural supplements containing nutrients and herbs would reduce unpleasant body odor by eliminating the root cause and help you avoid stress, anxiety, and embarrassment linked to the issue.

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