

For some, too much sweat takes emotional toll

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(HealthDay)—Don't sweat the small stuff. That's sound advice for

most—but not if you're one of the 7 million Americans diagnosed with hyperhidrosis.

People with hyperhidrosis [sweat](#) for no obvious reason. And their overactive temperature control system can cause them to avoid social settings altogether.

Hyperhidrosis often goes undiagnosed, said Dr. Robert Korst, medical director of the Valley Health System's hyperhidrosis center in Ridgewood, N.J.

Sweating is an involuntary activity that helps control [body](#) temperature. The body sweats to cool down and excrete waste products, Korst explained in a health system news release.

However, people with hyperhidrosis sweat more than necessary to regulate body temperature. The mere thought of shaking hands can moisten their palms, armpits or even their feet.

In some cases, hyperhidrosis happens all over the body, Korst said.

Excess perspiration can generate anxiety and discomfort, particularly in social gatherings, he added. The sweating can occur at any time, even when the body doesn't need to cool down. Certain foods, nicotine and caffeine can worsen the condition.

Hyperhidrosis often starts during childhood, and genetics may play a role in its development, Korst noted. There are three main types, each with its own treatment:

- **Primary focal hyperhidrosis:** Someone with this condition may be treated with medication or perhaps surgery. The problematic sweating occurs in specific parts of the body, such as the feet,

hands, underarms or face. In severe cases, sweat drips from the skin, which can lead to anxiety and depression or skin irritation and infections.

- **Generalized idiopathic hyperhidrosis:** This form involves [excessive sweating](#) on a large area of the body.
- **Secondary generalized hyperhidrosis:** A medical condition—such as menopause, thyroid disorder or diabetes—can cause this type of hyperhidrosis. It can also result from medication, exercise or heat. A dermatologist can help determine the cause and recommend a treatment.

More information: The American Academy of Dermatology has more about [hyperhidrosis](#).

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