How to Manage Sweaty Pit Syndrome at the Office

undershirtguy | May 13, 2011

Courtesy of the Style Blog over at Esquire.com, here are some tips they recommend for managing sweaty pits while at work:

1. Understand what’s happening to you. Dr. Kemp Kernstine, at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, who treats hyperhidrosis (extra-sweaty syndrome), explains the nervous sweat: “If you’re being chased by a saber-toothed tiger, you’re going to run. And if you don’t sweat ahead of time, your muscles will overheat and you’ll get eaten.” So, relax.

2. Grab the emergency kit you keep at your desk: deodorant, hand wipes, undershirt.

3. Go to the bathroom. Enter the handicapped stall.

4. Remove shirt, hang it on the stall hook. Remove undershirt. Throw it out.

5. Tremitchell Wright, textile expert at the Whirlpool Institute of Fabric Science, recommends dabbing the sweat stains with the hand wipes; their water mixture has a solvent that dries sweat.

6. Press a paper towel on either side of the offending areas as hard as you can, as if you’re trying to get a wine stain out of a white carpet.

7. Put on a lightweight sport coat so you never again have to suffer this indignity.


Tug’s 2 Cents

Some great advice above, especially the little tidbit about the solvent in hand wipes that dries sweat. Although, I don’t agree with #4 – throwing out the undershirt – that’s just pure madness!!

That said, for those who want to minimize/manage the sweat-through problem proactively, here are some other helpful tips:

1. If you don’t wear an undershirt, start (duh). There are plenty of lightweight undershirts on the market now that won’t add any extra bulk nor make you warmer when wearing them.
2. Try a stronger antiperspirant like Mitchum, Klima Antiperspirant, HyperDri Antiperspirant (No Aluminum), Sweat Block, SweatSheild Antiperspirant, Certain Dri, Drysol, Deodorite, Driclor, or Odaban. (last 5 courtesy of this YouTube Video)
3. Try undershirts that are made of fabric that are more absorbent than cotton, such as MicroModal.
4. Consider experimenting with fabric cooling sprays such as Non Froze Ice or Rubizusupure. I just learned about these from a friend who ordered them and agreed to send me one of his bottles to experiment with.
5. Consider buying underarm shields/pads that you can apply directly to your shirt or undershirt. Check out the products from Advadri, Garment Guard, Kleinerts, Hollywood Behind the Seams apparel shields, and Sweatex Underarm sweat pads. Many drugstores carry these type of garment shields.

6. If you sweat a little more then the average person, or need protection in other areas like your back and chest, check out undershirts that are specifically designed to minimize sweat-through such as Sutran, Advadri, Kleinerts, SweatShield, and Silverback Apparel. To find out more information about any of those undershirt products, simply search my site for those product names.

A Doctor’s Advice

Here’s some great information from Dr. Michelle Yagoda from Opus Skin Care in New York City about how she approaches the treatment of people with heavy sweating:

When a performer comes in complaining of excessive sweating, there are three different options:

1. First, I make sure the amount of sweating is not normal and related to intense exercise and performance because we don’t want to stop the body’s physiologic response for cooling. If it is a normal amount, I recommend disposable armpit shield guards that are either sewn into or velcroed on. If these guards cannot be found commercially, a trip to the tailor is all you need!

2. If it is an excessive amount of sweating, this can cause constant staining of clothes and soaking through the undershirt and shirt or even through the shirt and jacket. If this is a problem, I recommend a drysol solution two month trial.

3. If after two months drysol fails, I recommend the performer considers Botox or Dysport. Botox requires 20-50 units per armpit or 1/2 to one whole bottle. I start by injecting 25 units per side and reevaluate in a week after the full effects have taken place. The end point is not no sweating, again because of physiology, but a reduced amount of sweating. Depending on symptoms at this point, I may inject anywhere from 12-25 more units per side and reevaluate in a week. Injections are placed in a symmetric grid throughout the hair bearing area. Results start gradually and disappear gradually but generally last 3-5 months. Cost varies by doctor but is most comparable when assessed by cost per unit instead of anatomic area.