

Body Odours

SeXiangWei November 2007 issue

I remember during my junior college days, one of my classmates had to contend with the problem of body odor. It made her extremely self-conscious and affected her confidence. My class was very close-knitted and all of us tactfully pretended that we did not notice anything. Still, it did little to make her feel better.

As a matter of fact, body odor is quite a common problem for people living in humid, tropical climates. On its own, human perspiration is perfectly odorless. However, when mixed with bacteria found on the skin surface, bad odor may be produced. Certain people, due to health or emotional issues, tend to secrete perspiration that contains chemical substances which attract more bacteria. This explains why some people are more susceptible to body odor than others.

Causes of body odor:

1. Hot, humid weather

Naturally, when the weather feels damp and hot, sweat production will increase, leading to a higher occurrence of body odor.

2. Excess fats in the body

The chemical composition of perspiration produced by overweight individual seems to attract more bacteria than perspiration produced by a person of normal weight.

3. Fungal infection of the skin

4. Tight fitting clothing made of synthetic fibre

Such materials trap heat and moisture, thus providing a fertile breeding ground for bacteria.

5. Diet and lifestyle

Certain foods such as those rich in sulfur, sugars and proteins may contribute to body odor as they increase the bacteria-attraction potential of perspiration produced.

Tips to combat body odor:

1. *Take regular showers/baths*
First and foremost, keep yourself clean. Use shower gels with antibacterial properties. Avoid soaps made from tallow and animal fats as they tend to leave residues on the skin which may react with your perspiration to attract bacteria.
2. *Wear clothes that are made of breathable, natural materials like cotton*
3. *After showering, apply diluted apple cider vinegar to the areas of your body with high concentration of sweat glands such as the arm-pits.*
4. *Drink herbal teas made from mint and fennel seeds daily to keep the system fresh. Avoid this if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.*
5. *Consume plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and freshly-squeezed juices. They keep your body alkaline and help to reduce the amount of acidic waste materials.*

Recipe 1: Freshening and Detoxifying Herbal Bath

Ingredients:

Lotus Leaf	He ye	6 qian
Coix Seeds	Yi yiren	5 qian
Fresh Ginger	Sheng jiang	3 qian
Cyperus	Xiang fu	3 qian
Alisma	Ze Xie	3 qian
Rhubarb	Da huang	2 qian
Licorice	Gan cao	2 qian
Distilled Water		15 bowls

Application: 1

How to prepare:

1. Wash herbs thoroughly by rinsing a few times.
2. Crush coix seeds and ginger.
3. Place all the herbs in an earthen or glass pot.
4. Add 10 bowls of water and soak for 30 minutes.
5. After soaking for 30 minutes, place on the stove and bring to a boil with high heat.
6. Reduce to low heat and brew for 35 minutes.
7. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.
8. Steep to remove the herbs from the liquid.

How to use:

1. Fill your bathtub with warm water (water temperature should be between 38°C to 41°C).
2. Pour herbal extract into the bathwater.
3. Enjoy!

Recipe 2: Honeysuckle, Dandelion and Chrysanthemum Tea

Ingredients:

Chrysanthemum	Ju Hua	4 qian
Honeysuckle	Jin Yin Hua	3 qian
Dandelion	Pu Gong Ying	3 qian

Preparation:

1. Rinse all the herbs to remove dust and debris.
2. Place honeysuckle and dandelion in an earthen pot. Add 2 cups of water and soak for 20 minutes.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat and simmer gently for 40 minutes.
4. Remove from the heat. Add chrysanthemum. Cover and infuse for another 20 minutes.
5. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Recipe 3: Antibacterial Mint and Thyme Body Freshener

Ingredients:

<i>Dried thyme</i>	<i>1.5 teaspoon</i>
<i>Dried sage</i>	<i>1 teaspoon</i>
<i>Dried peppermint</i>	<i>1 teaspoon</i>
<i>Distilled water</i>	<i>1 cup</i>

How to make:

- 1. Rinse herbs once to remove any dust or debris.*
- 2. Soak the herbs in water for 15 minutes.*
- 3. Set on the stove and heat lightly. Do not boil.*
- 4. Remove from the heat and allow to cool completely.*
- 5. Remove the herbs from the mixture.*
- 6. Add in lemon juice and mix well.*

Fill the toner into a clean glass bottle. Store in the fridge

How to use:

After showering, towel dry. Pat on the body freshener and allow to air dry completely.