Oh, Sweat!

If you think you perspire way too much, read on.

June 6, 2016 By Kate Ferguson

Do you suffer from clammy palms, sticky feet, wringing-wet underarms or beads of moisture rolling down your scalp onto your neck? If so, you may have a condition called hyperhidrosis. This excessive sweating affects at least 220 million people worldwide.

“This condition is a not a mild nuisance experienced by a few people,” says Dee Anna Glaser, MD, a professor of dermatology at Saint Louis University, who surveyed 150,000 American households to find out how common hyperhidrosis is in the United States. “This is a big problem for many people,” she adds.

In general, there are two types of hyperhidrosis. Excessive sweating on the scalp, feet and armpits signals primary focal hyperhidrosis, which may be caused by genetics. But excessive sweating can also be caused by an underlying medical condition, such as diabetes, heart, lung or thyroid disease, cancer or an infectious disease, such as tuberculosis. This is called generalized, or diffuse, hyperhidrosis.

But the good news is, there are effective treatments for hyperhidrosis. Therapies range from prescription antiperspirants, medicines and treatments, such as Botox injections and iontophoresis (a treatment that uses mild electrical currents), to surgically removing the sweat glands. In addition, there’s an electromagnetic device called miraDRY approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat excessive sweating.

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