



## INTERNATIONAL HYPERHIDROSIS SOCIETY *KNOW SWEAT!* SURVEY FACT SHEET

The International Hyperhidrosis Society (IHHS) sponsored two surveys on behalf of the Know Sweat! campaign. An online survey of attitudes of the general population in North America towards sweating was conducted by Harris Interactive and included 1,005 U.S. adults. A second similar survey was distributed to the IHHS international database of hyperhidrosis sufferers and garnered 671 respondents from the U.S. Key results are as follows.

### Sweat-Inducing Situations and People

**The “sweatiest” moments for Americans were on-the-job. When asked what situations induce sweating, 63 percent cited the following job-related issues (respondents could choose up to three situations):**

- Running late for an important event (32 percent)
- Making a presentation (26 percent)
- Going on a job interview (21 percent)
- Asking for a raise or promotion (nine percent)
- Preparing to submit my resignation to my boss (six percent)
- Opening an acceptance or rejection letter (two percent)

**Job issues outweighed social situations (42 percent) such as:**

- Having a fight or difficult conversation (27 percent)
- Going on a first date (10 percent)
- Cooking a meal for in-laws, family or friends (five percent)
- Going to a formal dinner or black-tie affair (four percent)

**Other “sweat inducing” circumstances included:**

- Eating spicy food (32 percent)
- Public speaking (28 percent)
- Getting test results from a doctor (13 percent)
- Taking an important test (eight percent)
- Flying in an airplane (seven percent)
- Telling a lie (six percent)
- Returning a purchase to a store (three percent)

**As for sweat-inducing people, authority figures are the most likely to make people sweat (respondents could choose up to three people):**

- Law enforcement (41 percent)
- Boss or client (40 percent)
- Teachers (20 percent)
- Peers/colleagues (18 percent)
- Significant other (16 percent)
- Parents (16 percent)
- In-laws (11 percent)
- Kids (nine percent)
- A celebrity (nine percent)



## Excessive Sweating

In the Harris survey, **12 percent** of respondents said they sweat all the time. However, of these people, **83 percent** had not seen a doctor or another health care professional about their sweating, citing reasons such as:

- I don't think I have a problem (57 percent)
- I don't think anything can be done about it (28 percent)
- I haven't had the time (14 percent)
- I am too embarrassed (two percent)

**Twelve percent** of Harris respondents said they sweat in any situation, no one more than another. In contrast, when asked how often they sweat in daily life, **80 percent** of the patients that responded to second survey, from the International Hyperhidrosis Society patient database, said that they sweat almost all the time or all the time.

Of the full Harris survey population, only **42 percent** would see a doctor if they experienced excessive sweating, and **62 percent** perceive the condition as treatable by a doctor.

In contrast, in the IHHS survey, **82 percent** of respondents had been to see a doctor or healthcare professional.

In the Harris survey, **15 percent** of respondents said they feel they sweat too much, versus **98 percent** of the excessive sweating sufferers that took the IHHS survey. Fifty-seven percent of people that took the IHHS survey had been officially diagnosed with hyperhidrosis by a doctor.

In the Harris survey men were more likely than women to say they sweat sometimes or all the time (**70 percent of men vs. 57 percent of women**), although they are less likely than women to be embarrassed by it.

**People who suffer from excessive sweating are more likely than the general population to be embarrassed by it when compared to other typically embarrassing situations:**

| Situation             | Harris survey respondents who feel sweating in public is equally/ more embarrassing | IHHS survey respondents who feel sweating in public is equally/more embarrassing |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Having stage fright   | 51 percent  | 92 percent   |
| Burping in public     | 49 percent  | 89 percent   |
| Having bad breath     | 61 percent  | 91 percent   |
| Having one's fly open | 50 percent  | 86 percent   |
| Having severe acne    | 47 percent  | 84 percent   |
| Having body odor      | 53 percent  | 84 percent   |
| Losing one's hair     | 49 percent  | 83 percent   |
| Having gas in public  | 49 percent  | 81 percent   |
| Being obese           | 53 percent  | 82 percent   |

## Others' Perceptions of Sweating

Of the people that responded to the IHHS survey, a full **88 percent** said that they had experienced a negative reaction from others towards their sweating, such as being made fun of or having someone appear put-off. In contrast, only **nine percent** of the Harris survey respondents felt that they had experienced a negative reaction because of their sweating.

However, **19 percent** of Harris respondents and **11 percent** of IHHS survey respondents said that they themselves had reacted negatively to someone else who was sweating.

**When asked their impression of someone they see who is visibly sweating, Harris respondents cited the following:**

- Nervous (66 percent)
- Overweight/Out of Shape (49 percent)
- Hard-working (42 percent)
- Excited (29 percent)
- Sick or unhealthy (25 percent)

## Coping with Sweating

**Of the people who responded to the IHHS survey, 97 percent are doing something to reduce or prevent their sweating, as are 86 percent of the people that took the Harris survey. Methods include:**

| Method of Coping  | Harris survey respondents | IHHS survey respondents |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Use deodorant or anti-perspirant                                | 79 percent                | 77 percent              |
| Shower often  | 43 percent                | 36 percent              |
| Wear (or avoid) certain types of clothes                        | 31 percent                | 74 percent              |
| Avoid situations that make me sweat                             | 17 percent                | 47 percent              |
| Keep a towel accessible   | 13 percent                | 37 percent              |
| Hold tissue in my hands to avoid sweat                          | 10 percent                | 44 percent              |
| Get medical care from a doctor or other healthcare professional | 3 percent                 | 27 percent              |
| Wear make-up  | 2 percent                 | 3 percent               |
| Use over-the-counter medication                                 | 2 percent                 | 16 percent              |
| Other   | 3 percent                 | 23 percent              |

## Survey Methodologies

The Harris Interactive study was conducted among U.S. and Canadian adults ages 18 and older between January 17 and January 21, 2005. All interviews were conducted online (using the Harris Poll Online database of several million members who have agreed to participate in online research) and averaged 10 minutes in length. The total sample includes 1,361 North Americans (1,005 U.S. adults and 356 Canadian adults). Data were weighted to be representative of U.S. adults ages 18+ and Canadian adults ages 18+. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 2.7 percentage points. The margin of error for the U.S. sample is +/- 3.2 percentage points and the margin of error for the Canadian sample is +/- 5.3 percentage points.

The International Hyperhidrosis Society's study consisted of an online survey sent to the Society's patient database of 4,639 people. Responses from 769 people were collected between March 7 and March 16, 2005. Of the respondents, 665 live in the U.S., 43 live in Canada and 61 live outside the U.S. and Canada.

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