

## From the Executive Director

The weight and constraints of living with hyperhidrosis are a core reason why the IHHS puts so much heart and effort into raising awareness about living with and treating this condition. Yet at its roots, the IHHS derives much motivation and positivity from the layers of hope and high expectations that lay in the bedrock of our organization.

This approach is based in fact. In the past five years, we've witnessed great advances in treatment options. Thanks in good part to the efforts of the IHHS and its supporters, these advances—and the simple knowledge that excessive sweating is a real and treatable medical condition—are gradually pushing us toward an ever-improving future.

Whether you're just beginning the quest to learn more about hyperhidrosis, or whether you've been on this road for a long time, always know that the IHHS is with you every step of the way. Join us on this journey: become an active IHHS member, share a story, make a donation...We're all in this together.

**Lisa J. Pieretti, MBA**  
**Executive Director**  
**International Hyperhidrosis Society**  
**LJP@SweatHelp.org**

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## IHHS Education Seminars

### Prove to be Worthy Investments

**W**We arrived at some happy conclusions at the close of the IHHS's medical education seminar in Atlanta this June. Yes, these sessions have an immediate impact on the seminar attendees-- this shared opportunity to give and receive top-of-the-line hyperhidrosis care leaves doctors and other healthcare professionals excited to put all they've learned into practice; patient volunteers, who've received Botox injections or tried iontophoresis for the first time under the direction of one of our expert dermatologists, have a new lease on dryness.

But more important is the wider impact of these seminars. When seminar attendees take their new expertise out into the real world of the hyperhidrosis sufferer, more people receive hyperhidrosis care from healthcare professionals who have received top of the line training in the latest and best hyperhidrosis treatments. It's important to keep in mind that treatments for excessive sweating are most successful when they are done by a healthcare professional who has received specialized training. Browse our Physician Finder to locate a doctor in your area who treats hyperhidrosis; those with a star by their names have been specially trained at one of IHHS's educational seminars.

The IHHS has been offering these dynamic teaching and training sessions for a number of years. We continue to keep the format of these events fluid so that each year we can adjust our offerings in order to bring medical professionals the state-of-the-art in hyperhidrosis care.

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Again this year we received great reviews and stellar feedback from the attendees. Every year, we are impressed with the large number of healthcare providers who leave these sessions with a plan of action to offer more and better treatment options to their hyperhidrosis patients. This immediate cause and effect certainly reinforces the importance of offering these unique



seminars.

Many of the healthcare professionals who attended these sessions also indicated that they were planning to make a concerted outreach to more patients with excessive sweating. One doctor said that she will be “purchasing an iontophoresis machine for in-office treatments.” Another said he would be offering more Botox with “improved injection techniques and improved pain control.” One dermatologist said that the seminar had taught him to “better incorporate his office staff in order to more efficiently treat hyperhidrosis patients.”

Some of the most heartfelt and appreciative comments

came from the hyperhidrosis patients who volunteer for treatment at these events. Here’s what Amanda, who attended the Atlanta session said:

*“I wanted to write you to thank you for putting together an amazing seminar in Atlanta. I am so happy to finally have found treatment and relief for my axillary and palmar hyperhidrosis after so many years! My mother tells me I have been suffering from this since I was about 10; that’s 15 years that I have been living with this frustrating and debilitating condition. School and work have been embarrassing in the past and I am now much more confident! I only wish more people knew about hyperhidrosis and its negative effect on the people suffering with it!”*

And this from Robert, also from the Atlanta session:

*“I always look forward to the IHHS seminars, as treatment with Botox for my cranial/facial area is not covered by my insurance. I so appreciate the free injections I receive at the seminar, in exchange for taking part in the training sessions. Otherwise, I could not afford the Botox treatment... I hope that the IHHS will continue to offer these seminars and that sponsors, like Allergan, will continue to take part; this is a lifeline for so many of us who have nowhere else to turn to for treatment.”*

Lisa Pieretti, Executive Director of the IHHS says that the strong review and sellout crowds for these educational sessions justify their place in the IHHS educational calendar.

“The high attendance at these events is extremely encouraging from the standpoint of the future quality of hyperhidrosis care; and strong reviews from attendees seem to beget bigger crowds every year.

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This, in turn, reinforces the importance of these events and helps us garner the sponsorship dollars necessary to continue offering them. Each year we must attract sponsors for these events; strong reviews and positive word-of-mouth help us make the point.”

Medical professionals: keep an eye out for the announcement of our next hyperhidrosis teaching and training seminar and join us in our quest to bring outstanding hyperhidrosis care to all who suffer with excessive sweating. Sign up to be on our Alert List by sending us an email [info@SweatHelp.org](mailto:info@SweatHelp.org) with “2011 Education Calendar” in the subject line and get advance news of these popular events.

Also: Please note that we have more Physician Assistants completing these training sessions than ever before. Another indication that the treatment of hyperhidrosis is becoming highly integrated into the dermatology practice.

We look forward to seeing more new faces at next year’s seminars, so be certain to register early to assure

your place. Don’t forget that office staff are welcome to accompany healthcare providers at no extra charge. In the meantime, for a little how-to knowledge, take advantage of our training videos on our Web site. We hope to see you in 2011! ●

**Now, see if there’s someone from your town who’s on the list; take advantage of these highly trained professionals in your own backyard! You can see their profile in our Online Physician Finder at [www.SweatHelp.org](http://www.SweatHelp.org)**

Dee Anna Glaser, MD  
David Pariser, MD  
Kelley Pagliai Redbord, MD  
Daniel Carrasco, MD  
Douglas Ahn, MD  
Allison Divers, MD  
Stuart Hetrick, DO  
Samantha Hill, MD  
Stanley Hoffman, MD  
Rona Beth Holmes, MD  
John Kayal, MD  
Dawn Kleinman, MD  
David L. Larson, MD  
Quang Nguyen, DO  
Mohammed Zafar, MD  
Olga Zarkh, MD



## Thinking ETS to Manage Your Excessive Sweating?

Proceed with Caution!

**P**eople with excessive sweating live with a variety of day-to-day challenges: personal and professional limitations, ongoing discomfort, looming embarrassment, to name just a few. Hyperhidrosis sufferers know that this one thing impacts everything they do (or can't do); it's an ever-present worry.

Thankfully, we are seeing great improvements in treatment and in the understanding of this under-acknowledged condition. Yet far too often we hear from hyperhidrosis patients about their difficult and often irreversible side effects caused by endoscopic thoracic sympathectomy (ETS) surgery. Some have even lost their lives.

ETS is a procedure whereby a surgeon attempts to interrupt the transmission of nerve signals from the spinal column to the sweat glands in order to prevent these nerve signals from reaching the sweat glands. This surgery is performed with the patient under general anesthesia. A miniature camera is inserted into the chest under the armpit and a lung is temporarily collapsed so that the surgeons can cut, clamp, or otherwise destroy the nerve paths associated with the overactive sweat glands.

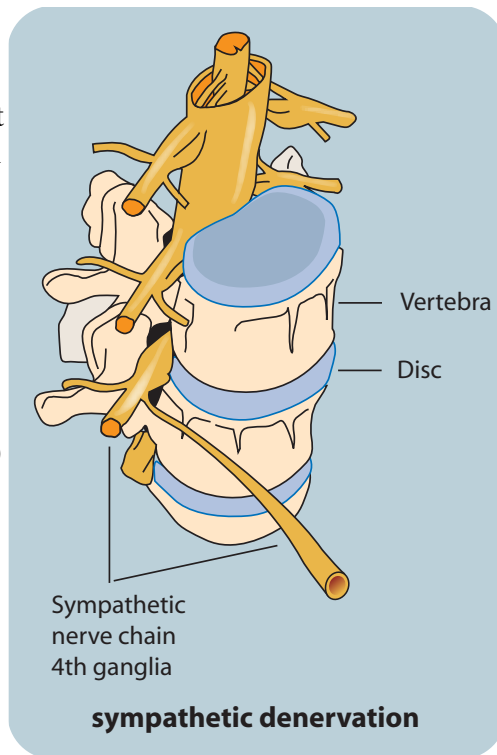
A recent story in a British newspaper described the case of a young woman, 27-year-old Louise Field, who became brain damaged after suffering from a lack of oxygen when her lung was accidentally punctured during ETS surgery to control her palmar hyperhidrosis.

With no chance of recovery, her parents Patricia and Phillip Green made the heartbreaking decision to turn off Louise's life support machine two days after the procedure.

Louise Field's unfortunate death is an extreme case, with clear indications of negligence on the part of her medical team (a lawsuit is pending), but it serves as a cautionary tale for those who are considering ETS for their excessive palmar sweating. Because ETS surgery has several serious side effects, and because its results are largely irreversible, many experts consider it an option of last resort.

The biggest drawback to this surgery is that, while ETS may be effective in reducing or eliminating the sweat in the targeted area, almost all patients experience some degree of compensatory sweating in a different part of the body.

Compensatory sweating is excessive sweating that occurs on the back, chest, abdomen, legs, face, and/or buttocks as a result of ETS surgery. It can be equally or even more extreme than the original sweating problem.



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For some professional perspective on ETS, we asked Dr. Daniel A. Carrasco a highly regarded dermatologist with a practice in Austin, TX, for his view on ETS:

*“None of my patients have had this procedure—probably because I do not recommend ETS very often and I never recommend lumbar ETS [plantar hyperhidrosis]. I have known of too many patients with severe complications, especially debilitating compensatory sweating, following routine ETS surgery for palmar hyperhidrosis. I advise other physicians against such procedures, especially the lumbar type. ETS for palmar hyperhidrosis is a procedure I might approve as an absolute last resort, especially if performed by a competent surgeon. This procedure has a very high success rate but also a very high rate of compensatory sweating.”*

This devastating account from a woman, who is experiencing a high degree of compensatory sweating, shows emphatically the downside of this procedure.

*“I am a 38-year-old woman who feels totally out of place. I started off sweating on my hands and feet and I had the ETS surgery. Immediately after the surgery, while I was still in the hospital bed, I awakened to a sweaty butt, back, and legs. The doctor said it was compensatory sweating and it would go away. I continued to sweat and eventually I requested the clamps used to block the nerves be removed. The doctor stated the nerve should regenerate itself and the compensatory sweating would stop and my hands and feet would probably continue to sweat.*

*It has been more than 4 years and in that time I have totally removed myself from everyone. I have had to switch job positions two times. I can't speak or stand*

*up in front of a crowd. My clothes get soaked. People often say I have a stain on my butt. My back, chest, and stomach constantly sweat. My ex boyfriend called me “sweaty butt” and always made comments about the bed being wet. I wear a lot of black and have spent hundreds of dollars on underarmor gear and underarm pads. Nothing works.*

*This condition causes me great depression. I cannot wear shorts, tank tops, or light-colored shirts. My jeans get wet in the butt and around the waist. I don't date. Every time I do, the young men always ask me ‘What is wrong?’ and ‘Why are my clothes wet? It's disgusting. I cry and cover up a lot. I need help.’”*

We strongly encourage people who are considering this procedure to do their homework; research all treatment options and talk to dermatologists and/or other healthcare professionals who are well versed in the techniques and side effects of this surgery. It's also important to talk to other patients who've had the surgery to get feedback on both their surgeons and their results.

Dr. James Headrick, a thoracic surgeon who performs ETS surgery for palmar hyperhidrosis in Chattanooga, TN, says that surgeons must take great care to “focus on optimum patient selection.” He adds, “It is really just a matter of trying to limit the procedure to those with severe primary palmar hyperhidrosis who have failed all other reasonable options. There is also a focused attention on the level of nerve to cut in order to try to minimize compensatory sweating. The procedure is now down to a single 3-5 mm single incision in each axilla, with no sutures used; it's an outpatient procedure with a 3-5 day recovery.” He concludes saying, “all patients have to be willing to accept some degree of compensatory sweating.”

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Here's a letter we received from a successful surgical procedure:

*"I just want to say that your website has given us great information during the several years I've subscribed searching for a solution to my daughter's sweating problems.*

*She is 20 and last Friday underwent a sympathectomy after exhausting every possible means of treatment available to her. She was hospitalized overnight, and back to work on Tuesday.*

*The exciting part is that she came out of the surgical suite with warm, dry hands for the first time since she was a little girl. This was truly life-changing surgery and while most people react with, "but isn't surgery a rather radical step to stop sweating?" we know that it was the answer to her prayers for a change in the quality of her life.*

*We are deeply grateful for all the support and help your newsletter has given us over the years. Please keep encouraging the medical community to find ways to combat this terrible affliction, and keep getting the*



*word out that help of many kinds does exist."*

In short: if you or someone you care about is considering ETS, a bit of caution and much research should accompany the decision too; look up health-care specialists in your area who offer hyperhidrosis treatment.

When researching ETS, be certain to review peer-reviewed, published studies. Simply typing "ETS" into Google will bring up a bevy of misleading sites promising things they don't deliver. The Internet is loaded with bogus claims about ETS and hyperhidrosis treatments. This is one reason why so many people who've undergone ETS are left devastated by the side effects.

Now as never before, people with hyperhidrosis have options. Talk to an expert and find the best choice for you. Get started today! ●

## Sponsorships and the IHHS: When It's a Perfect Match

The IHHS is the only bone fide non-profit organization devoted to improving the lives of people who live with excessive sweating. Because of the vast, global reach of the Internet, a small organization like the IHHS has been able to serve as the only independent source of information to the millions of people in all corners of the world who live with and treat hyperhidrosis.

The high regard of the IHHS stems from its stellar pedigree, including the foremost experts in dermatology and a Board of Directors that consists of the world-leaders in hyperhidrosis care. As an organization of medical experts, our core mission always is to provide

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the hyperhidrosis community with the best possible options for care and treatment.

In this realm of hyperhidrosis care, there are many players vying to help people with excessive sweating; many of them are reputable, but many are not.

The IHHS will partner with a corporate or individual sponsor to get the word out about a product or service when it is something useful or appropriate for our community members. On these occasions, there is never an instance where sponsors are able to dictate the terms of their partnerships with us. Above all, our integrity as a non-biased authority on hyperhidrosis care must never be put in question. Read our sponsorship guideline on our web site for more information.

Happily, there are many opportunities when the sponsorship partnership works beautifully, and often in a way that is mutually beneficial to both IHHS members and to the sponsors themselves. In numerous ways, the IHHS community benefits from sponsorships, like the sponsorship of the IHHS's very valuable educational and teaching events, or our teen outreach programs, or our free patient brochures, to name a few.

Likewise, the IHHS is able to provide sponsors with the attention of select audience that is highly interested in products and treatments that deal with hyperhidrosis.

Five years ago, when the IHHS was just getting off the ground, the folks at Certain Dri® generously sponsored the printing of 20,000 patient information brochures. These important brochures, available by request, provide both sufferers and medical professionals with comprehensive

information on hyperhidrosis and its treatments.

It speaks well of our outreach to say that we have exhausted the supplies of this initial printing! When it became clear that we'd need to do a second printing of these brochures, the good people at Certain Dri® stepped forward again and sponsored a second printing of our brochures!

A sponsor's relationship with the IHHS is typically a good thing for both parties. That's why we enthusiastically invite more corporate or individual sponsors, who have the well being of the hyperhidrosis community in mind, to consider a partnership with the IHHS. There are a variety of options for sponsorship and there is a long list of great programs that we'd like help implementing. Contact us [LJP@IHHS.net](mailto:LJP@IHHS.net) and we'll discuss the possibilities of working together to help the hyperhidrosis community. ●



## Two Paths to Treatment, Two Male Perspectives on Living with Hyperhidrosis

**L**iving with excessive sweating affects each person differently; but there are qualities of the condition that are shared universally by all hyperhidrosis sufferers. In whatever country and in whatever native tongue, millions of hyperhidrosis sufferers around the world would characterize their day-to-day lives as severely restrained by logistical, social, professional, and intimate inhibitions because of their excessive sweating. To expand on some of these commonalities, we asked two men to share their journeys from struggling-with to managing their excessive sweating. Their stories are different, but you'll notice the common themes...

Andre's hyperhidrosis symptoms began when he was in his early 20s. By the time he was 31 years old, he had endured many years of planning for and around his excessive underarm sweating. Andre never left the house without taking a minimum of three shirts with him. He elaborates: *"It affected virtually every part of my life; it was a constant weight around my neck, the way it held me down and prevented me from doing important things and even little everyday things."* *"I felt like I was going into battle every day. I'd have to plan everything to accommodate my sweating. From 8:30 in the morning until bedtime, I was sweating. I tried every kind of deodorant and antiperspirant out there, nothing came close to helping me stop it. I was becoming resigned to it, and carried around a duffle bag with a several changes of clothes wherever I went."*

Andre's social and professional life was severely

constrained by his hyperhidrosis, but he says he was "fortunate to have a wife who loves me for me, despite the sweating." One evening, while attending a family get-together with his wife's family, his life with hyperhidrosis took a serendipitous turn... It so happened that IHHS's Executive Director, Lisa Pieretti, a member of his wife's extended family, was also at this gathering.

*"Andre quietly approached me and asked if we could have a quick word in private. He said he knew that I was involved with an organization that worked with people who had excessive sweating. Then he told me that he had been suffering for years with underarm hyperhidrosis."*

Pieretti beams when she recounts Andre's request for help. *"When an opportunity to help someone I know and care about comes along, it is absolutely one of the best parts of my job. So, of course, when Andre approached me, I acted on it immediately. I got in touch with a local dermatologist who is a compassionate and skilled expert in treating hyperhidrosis — Dr. Anthony Benedetto. During his office visit, Andre and Dr. Benedetto decided that Botox injections would be a good management option for him. Within a couple of weeks, the excessive sweating that had formerly dominated his life had recessed into a manageable condition."*

*"I did have some minor concerns about the injections," he says, "but when it was all said and done, the couple dozen injections in each armpit were so worth it; any worry was dwarfed by my results; I'd never think twice about doing it again. I can't emphasize it enough: Botox injections changed my life. They saved me."*

Bob, who lives in Atlanta, began experiencing exces



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sive cranial/ facial sweating in his mid 40s. For him, hyperhidrosis was a major professional liability. "I am a gourmet food salesman, and when I call on customers and have them taste new and exciting products, I was usually dripping sweat from my head and facial area. He likens the experience to "being a waiter in a restaurant who comes over to show and describe the beautiful mouth-watering dessert tray all the while, sweat is dripping from his head. People would be turned off by that and would, of course, choose to pass on the desserts!"

*"In my personal life, I just restricted my activity to places that were cool. That is hard to do when you live in a hot climate like Georgia. When going to a restaurant, the hostess would ask if I preferred the smoking or non-smoking section; I would say 'put me at the table where people complain that it's too cold, or put me under a ceiling fan.' I always avoid hot, humid events, no matter what time of year it is."*

Bob began to get his life back three years ago when he volunteered to be a patient at one of the IHHS's renowned professional training seminars. "This was a life-changing event for several reasons: First, finding an expert who is qualified and has been trained in administering Botox treatment for excessive cranial/ facial sweating is very difficult. Second, I have been unsuccessful in trying to get my insurance to cover the cost of Botox injections, since I couldn't afford it on my own. Third, this opportunity not only allowed me to receive the life-altering Botox treatment, it allowed me to regain control of my professional life." Like Andre, Bob feels that the slight to modest discomfort experienced during treatment is completely worth the trade off of six to nine months of being free of excessive sweating.

Treating cranial/ facial sweating requires a skilled and

specially trained professional, so it was fortunate that Bob was able to volunteer for this special training event and receive treatment under the direction of some of the top specialists in the field. One of the most important aspects of hyperhidrosis treatment is that it works best when performed by a physician who has received special training and who has experience with the procedure. The IHHS's Physician Finder directory of medical professionals who treat hyperhidrosis can help start the ball rolling. Remember: those with a gold star by their names have received specialized training in treating excessive sweating from the IHHS.

Each of these stories shows the oppressive power that hyperhidrosis can have on a life. But they also illuminate the power of getting good treatment. Be it through a serendipitous meeting with a compassionate friend, or through a straight-forward fact-finding mission on the Web, taking the steps toward treating your hyperhidrosis can mean finally being free of the constant burden, free to be yourself. ●



Daniel Carrasco, MD treats Bob.

## About Us

The International Hyperhidrosis Society is the only non-profit organization that strives to improve the quality of life of those affected by excessive sweating. The International Hyperhidrosis Society knows no boundaries; it is composed of people from all over the world, making it a true global network of support, resources and understanding. It is our mission to promote hyperhidrosis research, educate physicians in optimal diagnosis and care, raise awareness about the condition's emotional and economic impacts, and advocate for patient access to effective treatments. As part of our mission, we continuously build programs that connect those who suffer from hyperhidrosis with those who provide care, while increasing public understanding of this debilitating medical condition.

The International Hyperhidrosis Society's Board of Directors is composed of an elite team of physicians who are leaders in hyperhidrosis research. These physicians have come together for the sake of improving the lives of those affected by excessive sweating. They are experts in the field of hyperhidrosis and leaders in efforts to better understand the condition, its ramifications, and its treatments.

### SWEAT STAT

Stress and anxiety are the most common factors reported to aggravate excessive sweating. Heat and exercise, not surprisingly, also cause increased sweating. Certain foods, particularly spicy foods, caffeine, and alcohol, may exacerbate sweating too.

