

# THE CENTER

FOR DERMATOLOGY, COSMETIC & LASER SURGERY

OUTLET: FITNESS

DATE: JUNE 2012



To outsmart sweat, it helps to know exactly what it does. When this mix of water, salt and other minerals evaporates from your skin, it cools you down, allowing your body to maintain its core temperature. "There are two kinds of sweat: eccrine, a thin liquid that cools all over the body when it's hot outside or when you exercise, and apocrine, a thick secretions found mainly at your underarms," says dermatologist Dr. James Glaser, M.D., president of the International Hyperhidrosis Society.

Apocrine is tied to odor and is typically related to stress. Although your diet, health and emotions may play a role, how much you sweat is mostly determined by genetics, as is where you sweat. The most common spots are your underarms, palms, soles and forehead because they have the highest density of sweat glands. (The underarm area is home to bacteria that digest sweat and produces BO.) Sweat patterns are highly individual. However, for instance, your back might perspire first

because the glands there are quickest to respond to your brain's signals in times of heat or stress, Dr. Glaser says. But sweating isn't only about your DNA. "Part of how much we sweat is adaptation," explains James Winget, M.D., a scholar of sports medicine at Loyola University Chicago-Stritch School of Medicine. "People who are used to a hot environment sweat

in the morning for the best results. "For your antiperspirant to work, it has to get into the sweat glands and block them," explains David Bank, M.D., a dermatologist in Mount Kisco, New York. "Overnight, you're calm and cool and your skin is completely dry, so a much higher percentage is going to be absorbed.

You can apply antiperspirant anywhere that sweat surfaces, but watch for irritation, especially on sensitive spots like your chest. For the area under your boobs, dust on baking soda when your skin is clean and dry. "Baking soda is antibacterial and anti-inflammatory. In addition to drying up moisture, it

prevents irritation," Dr. Bank says. To absorb sweat on your scalp, use dry shampoo, and to keep feet dry, try sweat-wicking inserts like Summer Soles (\$8, summersoles.com), Dr. Glaser suggests. To prevent down-there sweat, opt for an absorbent powder designed for that area. Your workout wear also makes a difference. Invest in high-tech synthetic fabrics that feel airy and wick moisture away from your skin.