



DEODORANT VS ANTIPERSPIRANT: WHICH ONE IS BEST FOR YOU?

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by Stephanie Blanchard

I can't remember the exact moment I realized deodorant and antiperspirant work differently, but I do know I had an epiphany when I learned the difference. Antiperspirant blocks sweat to fight body odor. Deodorant protects against B.O. but doesn't stop sweat. Although, deodorants may contain things that reduce wetness like [arrowroot powder](#), or other plant-based, absorbent ingredients.

We often use the terms “antiperspirant” and “deodorant” interchangeably. It's no surprise when people assume that they work the same way. It even happens in my own household. My husband heard about a newish deodorant brand on a podcast and requested some in his Christmas stocking. I steered him away from that because I knew he wouldn't love

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sweat stains or the [skin irritation from baking soda](#), a common ingredient in natural deodorants.

HOW DOES ANTIPERSPIRANT WORK?

Antiperspirants contain aluminum salts to reduce sweat. You may see aluminum zirconium, aluminum chloride, and aluminum chlorohydrate on product labels listed as "active ingredients." Aluminum salts block sweat by plugging the sweat ducts. So, when you apply antiperspirant, it's supposed to minimize wetness from the armpits.

Some antiperspirants advertise that they're effective against excess sweating (hyperhidrosis). But [antiperspirants can fail](#). Our bodies respond to some products better than others. When I was using antiperspirant, there were a couple of products that just didn't prevent sweat like I thought they would. You've experienced that, too, right?

Out of curiosity, I googled "why do antiperspirants fail?". One antiperspirant immunity [theory in the Huffpost](#) speculated that our bodies may sweat more to compensate for the blocked sweat ducts. The article mentioned that you could even go as far as getting surgery to treat hyperhidrosis.

In previous years, people living with the condition have undergone surgery to remove problem sweat glands. According to the International Hyperhidrosis Society, most physicians no longer recommend the surgery because it can cause significant problems, including [increased sweating](#) from other places on their bodies.

So, there could be a correlation between antiperspirant use and *increased sweating*.

Aluminum can be annoying in other ways. Not only does it block your pores, the heavy metal stains clothes—you're probably familiar with yellow sweat stains. Those aren't caused by your perspiration. Aluminum is the culprit. It can even make body odor worse by increasing the number of odor-causing bacteria on your skin.

It's important to understand the meaning behind claims like "48 hour protection." Claims to reduce sweating are regulated by the FDA and not taken lightly. Aluminum is a drug and in order to say a product reduces perspiration or blocks sweat, it has to reduce sweating by 20% for the

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amount of time indicated by the claims. Society has an expectation that sweat will be 100% blocked, but your antiperspirant is probably living up to its claims at a 20% reduction.

WHAT IS DEODORANT, AND IS IT REALLY EFFECTIVE FOR ODOR PROTECTION?

To explain how deodorants work, I need to share a little about sweat and bacteria. *Riveting stuff*, I know. Our bodies sweat to cool us down through evaporation. Despite what you may hear in a heated yoga class or read online, our bodies get rid of most toxins through the kidneys, not our sweat glands. But, our skin does rid our blood of minor impurities that, in high enough concentration, are toxic, like urea.

Sweat is generally odorless, but bacteria live on human skin and feed on our sweat. That process is what causes body odor.

Most deodorants mask or neutralize odor after it's formed with strong fragrances. They can also inhibit bacteria. Like with most personal-care products, different brands work better for different people. If you're cool with freshening up throughout your day, you may have to apply deodorant periodically for best results.

CAN A DEODORANT DELIVER ODOR PROTECTION BETTER THAN AN ANTIPERSPIRANT?

In recent years, the deodorant market seems to have exploded, especially for natural brands. I remember back in 2013, I bought natural deodorant on Etsy because I couldn't find an effective option in my local stores. Now you can find at least a couple of well-rated natural deodorants at mass merchants.

At one time, it was a common belief that deodorants just couldn't prevent body odor as well as an antiperspirant. The thought makes sense because deodorants don't prevent sweat, so how could they be better at controlling odor? Let's find out!

BAKING SODA IS OFTEN USED IN DEODORANTS

Deodorants prevent body odor with ingredients that kill bacteria, preventing them from feeding on your sweat and making you smell less than fresh. One common ingredient that prohibits bacteria is baking soda. The ingredient may be listed as sodium bicarbonate on a product label.

Baking soda is often used to inhibit bacterial growth and neutralize body odor. Once the baking soda neutralizes sweat, it is no longer effective at controlling body odor. That is why the best you can hope for is 8-12 hours of odor control.

Plus, if your underarm skin can't tolerate baking soda, the deodorant is basically useless. No one wants to smell bad or deal with skin irritation. Thankfully, clinically-proven, effective baking soda-free deodorants exist, like [Lume Deodorant](#). Lume prevents bacteria from feeding on sweating and creating odor in the first place.

DEODORANT VS ANTIPERSPIRANT: EITHER ONE MAY CONTAIN INGREDIENTS THAT MAY IRRITATE YOUR SKIN

If you have sensitive skin like me, you may have developed itchy or painful rashes from antiperspirants and deodorants. So, what gives with baking soda? It all has to do with chemistry. Our skin is slightly acidic, acting as a barrier that helps keep harmful bacteria out. Remember, not all bacteria are bad.

Unlike our skin, baking soda is highly alkaline. Applying a deodorant containing baking soda can change your skin's pH level, which can cause irritation, such as contact dermatitis. But it gets worse! Changing your skin's pH can strip it of its protective acid mantle (often referred to as natural oils) that protect it from bacteria, the bad kind.

People with sensitive skin may also experience skin irritation from the fragrance ingredients found in deodorants and antiperspirants.

WILL I SWEAT LESS WITH A DEODORANT?

Some people find that after a couple of weeks of using an aluminum-free deodorant they sweat less (or at least it becomes less noticeable). Why? Possibly because once your body gets rid of all the aluminum in the sweat ducts, it cools you down with less effort.

LUME CONVINCED ME TO CHOOSE DEODORANT OVER ANTIPERSPIRANT

I came across an [ad for Lume Deodorant](#) one day and decided to give it a try. I was shocked that it was so effective! Since I've been blogging for the brand, I learned that it works by stopping bacteria from feasting on sweat. Lume is hypoallergenic so it does that without irritating ingredients. It doesn't change the skin's healthy pH either. In addition to being aluminum-free and baking soda free, Lume does not contain propylene glycol or parabens. And, it delivers sweat protection with arrowroot powder, not questionable ingredients like talc. Plus, it's not only an underarm deodorant. You can use Lume on feet, under breasts, on man parts and other stinky bits.

You can choose between two application types: a traditional applicator stick or a tube. Lume comes in different fragrances too. I love the [Jasmine Rose scent](#). If you're sensitive to smells, even naturally derived ones, then [Unscented Lume](#) is for you.

CHOOSE A DEODORANT OR ANTIPERSPIRANT? IT'S A MATTER OF PERSONAL PREFERENCE

There are more than 3500 Google searches a month for deodorant vs antiperspirant! That's a lot of people looking for help on whether to choose a deodorant or antiperspirant. One may work better for you than others.

I highly recommend Lume as it has been [clinically tested](#) and proven more effective than the other leading brand. Lume is proven to reduce underarm odor for up to 72 hours! But please don't take my word for it. Check out what others have to say in their [reviews](#). Lots of people have had odor-fighting success with Lume.



STEPHANIE BLANCHARD



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