

Night sweats

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Symptoms

Night sweats are defined as drenching sweats that require you to change your bed clothes. However, many people with HIV have what they describe as 'night sweats' characterised by persistent sweating at night which disturbs their sleep. Night sweats can be accompanied by high fluctuating fevers, low grade fevers, flushed cheeks and warm palms and soles.

Causes

HIV itself—or another infection or illness—is the most likely cause. Menopause can be accompanied by night sweats. [Diabetes](#) [1][Diabetes mellitus] A disorder in which sugars in the diet cannot be metabolised into energy due to a lack of the enzyme insulin. Late-onset diabetes mellitus may be a long-term side effect of some anti-HIV drugs. or low blood sugar is often associated with night sweats. Some medications including antidepressants are associated with night sweats. Taking paracetamol (e.g. Panadol) or aspirin to relieve the symptoms of fever can result in a rebound of the fever and night sweats as the drugs wear off.

Alcohol use, particularly alcohol dependence can be a cause. Emotional and mental factors such as depression, stress, and anxiety may result in night sweats. Other causes include some HIV [antiviral](#) [2]A medication or substance which is active against one or more viruses. May include anti-HIV drugs, but these are more accurately termed antiretrovirals. drugs such as indinavir (infrequent) and saquinavir (less than 2%).

Complementary & Supportive Therapy

Drink: Nettle tea (*Urtica dioica*) or sage tea (*Salvia officinalis*) (steeped in boiling water for at least four to six minutes), then strained and sipped throughout the day—two to five cups. Whole Lemon Drink (see recipe at the end of this booklet) can also help.

Medical & Drug Treatment

It is important to seek advice from your medical practitioner as night sweats are rarely a drug [side effect](#) [3]An unwanted effect caused by the administration of drugs. Onset may be sudden or develop over time. and are most likely due to an infection or uncontrolled HIV disease. Medical and drug treatment depends on the underlying causes. Replacement of fluid lost through sweating by increasing water intake and Gastrolyte to replace important electrolytes (minerals) is important. Taking anti-fever drugs before bed like paracetamol (e.g. Panadol), aspirin or ibuprofen (e.g. Nurofen) may result in the rebounding of fever and night sweats when the drugs wear off. However, if you wake up from night sweats and fever is the cause, these drugs can help relieve the fever and the associated night sweats.

Special Precautions & Considerations

- Sage can be especially drying—do not take for more than two weeks.
- If you have diarrhoea, **DO NOT** take the Whole Lemon Drink remedy as it can make diarrhoea worse in some people.

[◀ Anaemia](#) [4][up](#) [5][Skin problems / rash](#) [▶](#) [6]

Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/95>

[2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/123>

[3] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/469>

[4] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/managing-side-effects/anaemia>

[5] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/managing-side-effects/managing-common-side-effects>

[6] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/managing-side-effects/skin-problems-rash>