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PHOTOGRAPHS BY DORON GILD

maintenance

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A photograph of a man in a white toga standing on a stone pedestal. He is looking to his left with his right arm raised behind his head. A fine mist of water is spraying from the left side of the frame, hitting his torso and the toga. The background is a dark, textured wall.

NO SWEAT

For those of you about to perspire, we offer these secrets to staying dry.

PROP STYLING BY BRIANNA LANCE

COOL

WARNING: WHEN YOU BID FAREWELL TO ARMS, YOU MAY OPEN

THE STAND-ALONE VEST—FAVORED by Justin Timberlake, Cedric the Entertainer, and circus ringmasters everywhere—is a little bit like that eccentric uncle you see only at Thanksgiving: occasionally endearing, mostly

mortifying, and always better in small doses. Liberated from the three-piece suit, the vest can assume remarkable powers, like the ability to turn otherwise anemic inhabitants into the kind of guys who attract Kate Moss. But

more often than not, the magic works in reverse, and suddenly you're a balding high-school art teacher with a ponytail and a kiln full of shattered dreams. If you're already comfortable in a V-neck T-shirt and skinny

jeans—or an ascot and double-breasted tweed—donning a vest can be relatively painless. One false step, though, and even the dandiest Oscar Wilde can find himself undone by the powder keg strapped to his back, leav-



ANTIPERSPIRANTS: In addition to perfuming your pits and repelling bacteria, antiperspirants temporarily—and safely—gum up some of the waterworks. (Your armpits house only about 1 percent of your sweat glands. “You would never be plugging 100 percent of them,” says Richard Korb, an antiperspirant expert with Unilever.) Most antiperspirants use aluminum salts such as aluminum chlorohydrate or aluminum zirconium tetrachlorohydrate, which can aggravate some guys’ skin. If that’s you, try switching to a product with a lower concentration of aluminum (it generally ranges from 8 to 20 percent). The figure is listed on the back label under ACTIVE INGREDIENTS. Sprays, roll-ons, and wax sticks are all effective, but for guys with thick hair under their arms, the gellike stuff works best. Just resist the urge to sculpt.

Armpit Myths

THREE COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PERSPIRATION.

- 1** It’s unhealthy to block the sweat glands under your arms.

You perspire not to get rid of toxins but to regulate your body temperature, and you have more than 2 million sweat ducts from head to toe to help you do that. So the tiny fraction under your arms aren’t crucial. They’re concealed from the air—especially when you’re trying to hide pit stains—which makes the area hard to chill via evaporation.
- 2** Fat guys sweat faster.

Guys like Jonah Hill get drenched after five minutes on the treadmill, right? Not true. The better your health, the sooner you start to sweat. When your body’s in top form, it’s primed to dissipate heat. When it’s prone to lounging, it needs time to start the pumps.
- 3** The ingredients in antiperspirants are bad for you.

According to the National Cancer Institute, there’s no proof that the aluminum salts used to block the sweat glands in your armpits cause breast cancer. They don’t even get through your hide. But, along with the glycols used in certain deodorants and antiperspirants, they can irritate skin, causing temporary reddening, stinging, or swelling.

How to Avoid Losing Your Shirt

AT WORK

When the first line of defense—your undershirt—fails you, bring on the underarm shields. The adhesive cotton absorbs sweat, so your colleagues don’t see watermarks when you raise your arms—and your dry cleaner doesn’t see your face as often. The thin beige pads are so discreet no one will know you’re wearing them.

TRY: *Garment Guards* (\$11 for five pairs), drugstore.com

AT HOME

Those yellow half-moons beneath your T-shirt sleeves don’t come from your antiperspirant: They’re a by-product of the sebum and sweat in your armpits. When mixed with sweat, however, the synthetic wax in some antiperspirants can make the stains worse. Look for it on the ingredients list or change your plan of attack. According to Jay Gooch of Procter & Gamble, deodorants are a little less troublesome.

TRY: *Kiss My Face Liquid Rock* (\$6), kissmyfaceweastore.com

AT THE GYM

Synthetic T-shirts and workout clothes designed to wick sweat from the skin also tend to act like petri dishes—incubating odor-causing bacteria. Halt the invasion with a heavy-duty, battle-tested, antimicrobial laundry detergent—say, perhaps, one strong enough to take on the U.S. Olympic team? (See below.)

TRY: *WIN High Performance Sport Detergent* (\$22 for four), sportdetergent.com



CAN BOTOX CONTROL PERSPIRATION?



For guys who prefer needles to deodorant, Botox is indeed an option. When it’s injected in the armpits, it blocks the signals from your nerves to your sweat glands and can decrease perspiration by more than 50 percent. The treatment is effective from six months to a year (much longer than the three to four months Botox works on forehead wrinkles), and it won’t weaken your arm or chest muscles, but Dr. David E. Bank, a New York dermatologist, warns that the needle might leave a small bruise.