

What is HS and how does it affect the people who live with it?

What is hidradenitis suppurativa?

Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a chronic and painful inflammatory skin condition.¹ It is characterised by recurring nodules, abscesses and pus-discharging tunnels that can result in odour.¹ Although much is still unknown about HS, international efforts are underway to better understand its epidemiology.²

1 in 100

Estimates indicate that **HS affects around 1 in 100 people** (in most countries for which data are available).¹ HS also appears to be more than **twice as common in women** than it is in men, based on estimates from four regions in the United States.³

Key challenges

It can take on average

up to **10** years

for a person with HS to receive an accurate diagnosis.^{4*}

Effective treatment options are limited, meaning that nearly

50% of people

with HS are dissatisfied with their current treatment.^{1,4*}

On average, people with HS report missing at least

2 days

of work per month due to their HS.^{5**}

Living with HS



MENTAL HEALTH

More than 1 in 3 people living with HS report having **depression, anxiety or both**, while approximately 1 in 11 has considered or attempted suicide.^{4*}



STIGMA

The physical symptoms of HS can cause feelings of **self-consciousness, embarrassment and shame**.^{4*}



WORK

HS may result in **absence from work** and unemployment.^{5** 6}



SOCIAL AND FAMILY LIFE

People living with HS often feel **unable to participate in family activities, social interactions and physical activities**.^{4* 5** 6}



INTIMACY

The physical symptoms of HS can lead to **anxiety around being intimate** and how the other person might react.^{5**}

'I used to be ashamed of my HS but being able to talk about it now is so important for me.'

Bente Villumsen
Danish Hidradenitis Suppurativa Patients' Association

The impact of HS on the lives of people affected is explored further in the international report *Call to action: improving the lives of people with hidradenitis suppurativa (HS)*.

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References

* Based on international survey data, with 1,299 participants in a survey from 2020.⁴
** Based on international survey data, with 537 participants in a survey from 2022.⁵

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