Olfactory reference syndrome
(delusions of bromhidrosis)

Bromhidrosis is a chronic condition in which excessive body odor, usually an unpleasant one, emanates from the skin. This condition is determined largely by apocrine gland secretion and can substantially impair a person's quality of life.

A small subset of patients may exhibit a delusion that a very unpleasant odor is emanating from their skin, a condition termed, olfactory reference syndrome (ORS). Olfactory reference syndrome is characterized by persistent preoccupation about body, oral or vaginal odor accompanied by shame, embarrassment, significant distress, avoidant behavior and social isolation. The primary feature of ORS is an olfactory delusion, and patients with ORS are diagnosed as having delusional disorder (somatic type) in DSM IV.

However, ORS does not have a specific DSM-5 classification. These patients may wash excessively, change clothes with more than usual frequency, and restrict social and domestic activities. There is disagreement whether this condition fits within the spectrum of obsessive-compulsive disorder or whether it belongs in the spectrum of social anxiety disorders that includes body dysmorphic disorder, or delusional disorder.