

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Test/Exam Anxiety Management

Why can a little bit of stress be helpful?

- A small amount of stress can motivate us and keep us focused

What is test/exam anxiety?

- Worries about performing below level or failing

Why might someone have test/exam anxiety?

- Underestimating one's own abilities
- A reaction to not enough test/exam preparation

## Symptoms

### Physical

- Sweating/sweaty palms
- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Dizziness
- Rapid heartbeat
- Muscle tightness

### Behavioural

- Procrastination
- Avoidance
- Studying too much
- Overeating
- Undereating
- Eating unhealthy foods
- Sleeping too much
- Not enough sleep
- Fatigue
- Unable to relax



### Emotional

Feeling the following emotions:

- Guilt
- Angry
- Depressed
- Unsure

### Cognitive

- Negative self-talk
- Over worrying
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty organizing thoughts
- Difficulty remembering answers during test
- Remembering answers after test

## Preventing Test Anxiety Tips

### Preparing for the test:

- Talk to your teachers to make sure you understand what will be on each test.
- Let your teachers know if you experience anxiety writing tests.
- Study in a space that is quiet place with few distractions and has good lighting.
- Try to study in the same place each time.
- Study a little bit each day instead cramming the night before the test.
- Practice using the study and test taking strategies you learned at school.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques like mindfulness or positive imagery.
- Take breaks while studying (e.g. Pomodoro method/short walk).
- Eat healthily and plenty of drink water.
- Pack your class/test materials in your bag the night before a test.
- Get into a good sleep routine. Have enough sleep the night before a test.

### The day of the test:

- Eat breakfast/lunch and drink water. Avoid caffeine and sugar as they may increase anxiety.
- Avoid doing things that may increase anxiety (e.g. cramming before the test).
- Relax in a place with few distractions.
- Do something relaxing before the test (e.g. belly breathing).
- Arrive on time for your test. Avoid being too early or late as it will add anxiety.
- Use positive self-talk like saying, "I can do it". Remember one test won't prevent you from achieving your goals.

### During the test:

- Use the test taking strategies you learned in class.
- At the start of the test, down a "memory dump". This means writing down notes on anything you think you may forget on the back or margins of the test.
- Expect some anxiety as it is natural before a test.
- Take mini breaks (e.g. 30 seconds).
- Practice calming techniques throughout the test like belly breathing.
- Focus on the immediate situation, avoid worrying about what will happen later.
- Avoid panicking if you see others finishing their test before you.

### After the test:

- Reward yourself. Do you something you enjoy.
- Learn from the experience to see what you can do for future tests. (e.g. reviewing each day, asking teachers for help during FIT)
- Talk to your teachers. Ask for additional feedback about questions you may not have understood or needed more explanation.

**Source:** Adapted resources from SFU Library Commons and Mayo Clinic

## Managing Your Test Anxiety

### Reflection Questions:

1. Under what specific circumstances do you experience the worst test anxiety?

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2. What happens when you experience test anxiety?

**Check** any symptoms you may experience.

#### Physical symptoms:

Sweating/sweaty palms

Upset stomach

Rapid heartbeat

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Headaches

Dizziness

Muscle tightness

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#### Behavioural symptoms:

Procrastination

Studying too much

Undereating

Sleeping too much

Fatigue

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Avoidance

Overeating

Eating unhealthy foods

Not enough sleep

Unable to relax

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#### Emotions symptoms:

Feeling guilty

Feeling depressed

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Feeling angry

Feeling unsure

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#### Cognitive symptoms:

Negative self-talk

Difficulty concentrating

Difficulty remembering answers during the test

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Over worrying

Difficulty organizing thoughts

Remembering answers after test

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3. What do you currently do to cope with your test anxiety?

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What are **three** strategies that you would like to try and practice to help manage your test anxiety?

Turn back to the previous page with the title **Preventing Test Anxiety Tips**. Check or highlight three strategies you would like to try.

**Adapted from source:** [www.winona.edu/resilience](http://www.winona.edu/resilience)