



Test Anxiety

CAUSES, SYMPTOMS, AND HOW TO MANAGE IT

Learning Target

- 1) I will explore the causes of test anxiety.
- 2) I will be able to recognize the symptoms of test anxiety
- 3) I will understand how test anxiety can be managed in order to still do well on exams.

Causes of Test Anxiety

- **Fear of failure.** While the pressure to perform can act as a motivator, it can also be devastating to individuals who tie their self-worth to the outcome of a test.
- **Lack of preparation.** Waiting until the last minute or not studying at all can leave individuals feeling anxious and overwhelmed.
- **Poor test history.** Previous problems or bad experiences with test-taking can lead to a negative mindset and influence performance on future tests.

Symptoms of Test Anxiety

- **Physical symptoms.** Headache, nausea, diarrhea, excessive sweating, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, light-headedness and feeling faint can all occur. Test anxiety can lead to a panic attack, which is the abrupt onset of intense fear or discomfort in which individuals may feel like they are unable to breathe or having a heart attack.
- **Emotional symptoms.** Feelings of anger, fear, helplessness and disappointment are common emotional responses to test anxiety.
- **Behavioral/Cognitive symptoms.** Difficulty concentrating, thinking negatively and comparing yourself to others are common symptoms of test anxiety.

Tips for Managing Test Anxiety

- **Be prepared.** Develop good study habits. Study at least a week or two before the exam, in smaller increments of time and over a few days (instead of pulling an "all-nighter"). Try to simulate exam conditions by working through a practice test, following the same time constraints.
- **Develop good test-taking skills.** Read the directions carefully, answer questions you know first and then return to the more difficult ones. Outline essays before you begin to write.

Tips for Managing Test Anxiety

- **Maintain a positive attitude.** Remember that your self-worth should not be dependent on or defined by a test grade. Creating a system of rewards and reasonable expectations for studying can help to produce effective studying habits. There is no benefit to negative thinking.
- **Stay focused.** Concentrate on the test, not other students during your exams. Try not to talk to other students about the subject material before taking an exam.

Tips for Managing Test Anxiety

- **Practice relaxation techniques**. If you feel stressed during the exam, take deep, slow breaths and consciously relax your muscles, one at a time. This can invigorate your body and will allow you to better focus on the exam.
- **Stay healthy**. Get enough sleep, eat healthfully, exercise and allow for personal time. If you are exhausted—physically or emotionally—it will be more difficult for you to handle stress and anxiety.

Tips for Managing Test Anxiety

Visit the counseling center. We are aware of the toll exams can take on students. We can help you practice positive thinking and relaxation techniques.

Last Names	Counselor 254-6900	Assistant Principal 254-6900
A-CI	Serenity Santistevan ext 24109	Alicia Timbreza ext 24100
Cm-GI	Scott Jagers ext 24104	
Gm-La	Ann Kuhlman ext 24142	Carol Coburn ext 24103
Lb-N	Karl Kane ext 24127	
O-Sh	Lori Plantiko ext 24121	Meghan Roenicke ext 24105 (Kyle Rush interim first quarter)
Si-Z	Nicole Hillegas ext 24111	
	Dean of Students—Tom LeFebre ext 24216	
	Principal—Ari Goldberg ext 24139	
10 th - 12 th	Progress Monitor—Robbie Owens ext 24278	

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