



Test Anxiety

Why do I feel so nervous about tests?

Most of us feel some anxiety when being tested. In fact, up to a certain point, it can improve your performance. However, too much anxiety can hinder your performance.

If you are anxious about tests, you may experience one or more of these three responses:

Physical - Butterflies-in-the-stomach, sweating, shortness of breath, and quickened pulse rate are typical physical responses.



What you can do:

- Eat a good breakfast.
- Avoid drinking coffee.
- Get enough sleep the night before.
- Distract yourself by reading a newspaper or magazine when waiting for the test to begin.
- Take some deep breaths during the test.

Feelings - Worry and fear are examples of some feelings which often go with test anxiety.

What you can do:

- Keep your perspective. One test won't make or break you.
- Prepare well! Why make it hard on yourself?
- Don't panic if you go blank.
- Don't look around at your classmates.

Thoughts - Thoughts which have nothing to do with the test may creep into your mind. When they do, don't get upset. Just bring your attention back to the test. This is a skill that can be learned.



What you can do:

- Focus on responding to the questions, not on your grade or on how others are doing.
- Remember: you don't have to be perfect.
- Don't think the test is all-or-nothing—there will be other chances to show your ability.
- Don't listen to your classmates talk about the test material right before the test—it may confuse you or cause you unnecessary anxiety.

Other points to consider:

- Avoid cramming for a test—it's better to study over a course of time so that you can effectively remember the material.
- Find a good, distraction-free place to study—it will help you concentrate on the material and remember it better.
- Don't believe that your grade on the test reflects your future success—it doesn't.
- Reward yourself after the test.

Remember:

The test is not the worst thing that can happen.