

TIPS FOR REDUCING TEST ANXIETY

1. Get a good night's sleep before the test.
2. Eat a good breakfast or lunch.
3. Bring all materials allowed or necessary: pens, pencils, etc.
4. Most test anxiety is the result of irrational fears. The only real cause for fear is insufficient preparation for a test, which almost always does result in a poor grade. If you know you are not prepared, then you must expect to have some anxiety. Calm yourself using relaxation techniques; then do your best on the questions you are able to answer.
5. Dress comfortably for tests. Wear loose-fitting clothes and comfortable shoes. Dress in layers so that you can put something on or take something off if the temperature in the room is too cold or too hot.
6. Develop a test-day tradition. Wear a pair of "good luck" jeans on test day or whatever outfit makes you feel successful. Maybe you have a lucky pen or some other lucky charm that can serve as a confidence builder. Some students find listening to a particular song or performing group on test-day works for them.
7. Arrive at the testing site on time. Don't be too early. If you have time on your hands before the test, waiting will make you nervous. Also, you may get into a conversation with other students who will shake your confidence by reminding you of material that you haven't studied. However, you don't want to be there too late either. Being late tends to increase nervousness.
8. Replace negative messages with positive ones such as "I will pass this test", "This is a step towards my goal", "I will do my best."
9. Don't panic if other students are busy writing and you are not.
10. Don't be upset if others finish before you.
11. Your body will tell you when you become anxious during a test. Learn to recognize the signals that may be signs of stress: increased pulse rate, excessive perspiration, shallow breathing, sweaty palms, upset stomach, and headache.
12. If during the test you experience signs of anxiety, calm yourself by using relaxation techniques.
13. Keep in mind, that a little anxiety won't hurt you and may be the incentive you need to do your best.
14. See test anxiety for what it is – a learned response that you can unlearn, a habit you can break.