

MOVING PAST TEST ANXIETY



If test taking anxiety persists and becomes more problematic, please contact

ATSU
Counseling
Services

We all experience some level of anxiety before a test. A little nervousness can actually improve performance. Too much anxiety can interfere with performance on tests. If you find that you tend to be too anxious before a test, you may find the following strategies helpful.

Before the test, take good care of yourself:

Be prepared. Do not leave cramming for the day before the test

Get plenty of sleep

Avoid any use of drugs or alcohol; they can interfere with mental ability

Exercise may increase your alertness and sharpen your mind

Have a moderate, healthy breakfast, avoid caffeine, sugar and junk food

Allow yourself plenty of time; arrive at the test location early

Choose a seat where you will not be easily distracted

Use abdominal breathing to help reduce anxiety. Inhale through your nose and fill your abdomen like a balloon. Count to three and slowly exhale, feeling your abdomen contract as you exhale

Do a reality check, put the test into perspective. Address catastrophic thoughts (*If I don't make a 95% on this test, I'm a complete failure*) and work to bring them more in line with reality (*I will survive if I do not graduate from medical school at the top of my class*)

Use positive affirmations, focus on what you know you can do

During the test, take a few minutes to:

Review the entire test. Read directions carefully

Work on the easiest portion of the test first

Pace yourself

If you go blank, skip the question and go on.

Multiple-choice, read all options first, eliminate the most obvious.

Remember that your first guess is usually the best option