

HOUSTON COUNTY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

APRIL 2023 EDITION

What is Test Anxiety & Test Taking Tips

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"OUR GREATEST WEAKNESS LIES IN GIVING UP. THE MOST CERTAIN WAY TO SUCCEED IS ALWAYS TO TRY JUST ONE MORE TIME."

– THOMAS EDISON

DID YOU KNOW?

APPROXIMATELY 25–40% OF US STUDENTS SUFFER FROM TEST ANXIETY.

WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY?

TEST ANXIETY IS A COMBINATION OF PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS AND EMOTIONAL REACTIONS THAT INTERFERE WITH YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM WELL ON TESTS. MANY STUDENTS EXPERIENCE VARYING LEVELS OF TEST ANXIETY FOR A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT REASONS. TEST ANXIETY MIGHT LOOK DIFFERENT FROM STUDENT TO STUDENT, BUT THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS THEY MIGHT EXPERIENCE:

- **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:** HEADACHE, NAUSEA, EXCESSIVE SWEATING, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, RAPID HEARTBEAT, LIGHTEADED, AND FEELING FAINT.
- **EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS:** FEELINGS OF STRESS, FEAR, HELPLESSNESS, AND DISAPPOINTMENT, NEGATIVE THOUGHTS, MIND GOING BLANK, AND RACING THOUGHTS.
- **BEHAVIORAL/COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS:** DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING, THINKING NEGATIVELY, COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS, AND PROCRASTINATING. CONCENTRATING, THINKING NEGATIVELY, COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS, AND PROCRASTINATING.

CAUSES OF TEST ANXIETY

- **FEAR OF FAILURE.**-WHILE THE PRESSURE OF DOING WELL ON AN EXAM CAN BE MOTIVATING, IT CAN BE DETRIMENTAL TO YOUR SELF WORTH IF YOU ASSOCIATE THE GRADE OF THE TEST WITH YOUR VALUE.
- **LACK OF PREPARATION.**-WAITING UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE OR NOT STUDYING AT ALL CAN LEAVE YOU FEELING ANXIOUS AND OVERWHELMED.
- **POOR TEST HISTORY.**-NOT SUCCEEDING ON THE PREVIOUS EXAM CAN MAKE YOU ANXIOUS FOR THE NEXT EXAM.
- **HIGH PRESSURE.**-IF YOU NEED A CERTAIN GRADE TO PASS THE CLASS, IT COULD INCREASE YOUR TEST ANXIETY.
- **PERFECTIONISM.**-PERFECTIONISM IS HAVING EXTREMELY HIGH PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS FOR YOURSELF. RESEARCH STUDIES SHOW THAT STUDENTS WHO HAVE HIGH PERFECTIONISM AND HIGH SELF-CRITICISM TEND TO HAVE HIGH TEST ANXIETY AND DO WORSE ON EXAMS.

HOUSTON COUNTY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

APRIL 2023 EDITION

What is Test Anxiety & Test Taking Tips

HOW TO REDUCE TEST ANXIETY

- BE PREPARED-MANY STUDENTS FIND THAT THEIR TEST ANXIETY EASES WHEN THEY START TO STUDY BETTER OR MORE REGULARLY. IT MAKES SENSE — THE MORE YOU KNOW THE MATERIAL, THE MORE CONFIDENT YOU’LL FEEL.
- ESTABLISH A CONSISTENT PRETEST ROUTINE. LEARN WHAT WORKS FOR YOU, AND FOLLOW THE SAME STEPS EACH TIME YOU GET READY TO TAKE A TEST.
- TALK TO YOUR TEACHER. MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT’S GOING TO BE ON EACH TEST AND KNOW HOW TO PREPARE. IN ADDITION, LET YOUR TEACHER KNOW THAT YOU FEEL ANXIOUS WHEN YOU TAKE TESTS.
- LEARN RELAXATION TECHNIQUES. TO HELP YOU STAY CALM AND CONFIDENT RIGHT BEFORE AND DURING THE TEST, PERFORM RELAXATION TECHNIQUES, SUCH AS DEEP BREATHING, RELAXING YOUR MUSCLES ONE AT A TIME, OR CLOSING YOUR EYES AND IMAGINING A POSITIVE OUTCOME.
- DON’T FORGET TO EAT AND DRINK. YOUR BRAIN NEEDS FUEL TO FUNCTION. AVOID SUGARY DRINKS SUCH AS SODA POP, WHICH CAN CAUSE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR TO PEAK AND THEN DROP, OR CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES SUCH AS ENERGY DRINKS OR COFFEE, WHICH CAN INCREASE ANXIETY.
- GET SOME EXERCISE. REGULAR AEROBIC EXERCISE, AND EXERCISING ON EXAM DAY, CAN RELEASE TENSION.
- GET PLENTY OF SLEEP. SLEEP IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.

HOW TO SUPPORT A CHILD WITH TEST ANXIETY

- DISCUSS THE TEST OPENLY AND IN A POSITIVE WAY.
- HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR CHILD’S PERFORMANCE WHILE ENCOURAGING HIS/HER BEST EFFORTS.
- EMPHASIZE THAT THE TEST IS ONLY ONE MEASURE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.
- EMPHASIZE THAT TEST SCORES DO NOT DETERMINE A PERSON’S WORTH.
- ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO GET ADEQUATE REST AND EAT ENOUGH.
- EXPRESS YOUR CONCERNS WITH YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER

