



Got Test Anxiety?

Nervous? Afraid of the test? Any of these sound like you?

- I think of the test as a threat, not a challenge.
- I worry about what happens if I do poorly on the test.
- I worry that my classmates will do better on the test than I will.
- A test gives me sweaty palms, butterflies, a headache....
- I have trouble keeping my mind on the test as I'm taking it.
- I have trouble remembering what I studied for the test.

**Sounds like performance anxiety. Movie stars have it too.
See the tips below. One or more may help.**

(Details on back.)

Prepare well ahead of the test date.

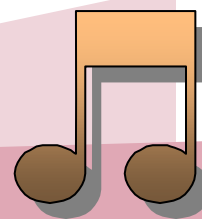
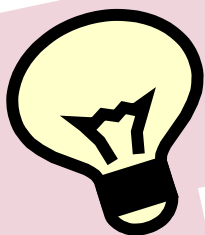
Decide what you'll have for a treat when you finish the test.

Write down your thoughts about the test immediately before taking it.

**Thoughts negative? Take some deep breaths. Tell yourself instead,
“I studied this. I know this. I am doing ok.” Say it again and again.**

**Read all test instructions carefully.
Focus only on doing the test.
Do your best.**

When it's over, give yourself that treat.



Sources:

Kishwaukee College, Illinois

Pennsylvania College of Technology

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/331/6014/211.abstract>—accessed

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EARLY COLLEGE FOR **ME**

Prepare for the test well ahead of time. Find a comfortable, non-distracting place to be. Take deep breaths and tell your muscles—group by group—to relax. Give yourself regular, short, study breaks.

Promise yourself a treat when you have finished the test.

Collect everything you need the night before the test, then get a good night's sleep.

The day of the test, eat well and skip caffeine, which can give you the jitters. Wear comfortable clothing, nothing too tight or fussy. Get there in plenty of time.

Don't talk to your classmates, and sit where you will be the least distracted.

Understand that if you fear the test and worry that you won't do well, your negative thoughts can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: telling yourself, "I'm afraid I'll fail," makes it more likely that you will fail or do poorly.

Write down your thoughts about the test right before taking it.

Research reported in the January 14, 2011, issue of *Science* magazine showed that doing this exercise before an important test enabled students to significantly increase their exam scores.

Notice your thoughts. Are they negative? If so, dismiss them with logical reasons why they are wrong and counter them with positive thoughts.

Tell yourself instead, "I know this—I am doing ok."

Do the same while you're taking the test. Relax. Take slow, deep breaths. Be sure you are as physically comfortable as possible. Counter any negative thoughts with positive messages: **"I studied this—I know this—I am doing ok."**

Read test instructions carefully.

Focus only on the test, not on what others are doing. If you are restless and you can get up, go sharpen your pencil. If you can't get up, stretch out your legs or your arms as possible or move your head, keeping your eyes on your work.

Do your best.

***And when it's over,
give yourself that treat.***