



WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY?

It is completely normal to feel a little anxious when you are being evaluated. We need some anxiety to help us perform better because it motivates us to prepare adequately! Test anxiety happens when a person's anxiety level becomes so overwhelming it prevents us from demonstrating what we know on a test. Test anxiety is typically comprised of

PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

Sweaty hands

Knotted stomach

Pounding heart

Butterflies

EMOTIONAL COMPONENTS

Fear

Panic

Avoidance

COGNITIVE COMPONENTS

Lack of concentration

Memory difficulties

Negative self- talk

Comparing self to others

WHAT IS NOT TEST ANXIETY

Lack of being prepared or inability to understand course information. This will cause stress and anxiety but is not test anxiety. If lack of preparation or understanding are your reality, your concerns will be best addressed through improving study habits, taking better notes, tackling procrastination, better time management skills and/ or accessing your instructors/ tutor.

TIPS FOR OVERCOMING TEST ANXIETY

- Identify your symptoms and triggers of test anxiety – catch it early before tests and exams.
- Identify and challenge negative self-talk – replace the negative with positive mantras “I can do this, I’m a good student, I’ve studied for this – I got it!”
- Use relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation, positive relaxation (repeating “I am calm” over and over).
- Find a calm space before exams and test, play some calming music before you go in.
- Avoid cramming! Give yourself enough time before the test – being frantic is contagious!
- Take care of yourself. Eat and drink before- hand. Your body need to have fuel and hydration to perform well.
- Create a test day routine that you follow to increase familiarity.

Remember, some anxiety is needed to help you perform! The aim is to manage anxiety rather than eliminate it completely so that it motivates rather than immobilizes!