**Test Anxiety**

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Do I have it?

It's normal to feel a little nervous before an important test. But if you usually have uncomfortable feelings before a test, then you might have test anxiety. Test anxiety affects people of all ages and intelligence, and its symptoms are based on your natural and biological "fight or flight" response. If you find tests to be anxiety producing, your mind likely perceives an upcoming exam as a threat, and then your body responds with a cascade of hormones that prepare the body for quick action in the face of the “test threat.”

Most people have some kind of test anxiety. Look over this list and see which one symptoms are familiar to you.

* Worrying about the test interferes with my studying; I can’t concentrate because I am nervous.
* I can't sleep well when a big test is coming up.
* I don't feel ready for a test, even if I study a lot.
* I have trouble physically relaxing before a test.
* I "freeze" when taking tests: I can't think and forget things I already know.
* My stomach becomes upset before important tests.
* I have negative thoughts while taking tests.
* My muscles become very tense when I take a test.
* I often have panicky feelings when I have to take a test.

If several or more of these items apply to you, you likely have test anxiety –perhaps a bit more than the normal nervousness associated with test taking. However, there is reason to be hopeful. You don't have to suffer from test anxiety forever.

Here are three ideas will help you cope:

1) embrace the anxiety (rather than fighting against it) by deciding to use it to your advantage

2) try to work on underlying psychological issues that may be contributing to the anxiety—what has led you to be upset about tests? Is it reasonable to be nervous? What is the worst that can happen? Is the worst really that bad?

3) set up a study plan for the next test so that you feel better prepared.

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<http://www.testprepreview.com/modules/reading1.htm>

<http://www.testprepreview.com/modules/readingtest2.htm>

Practice CPT or other academic standardized tests in reading vocabulary:

<http://www.testprepreview.com/modules/readingvocabulary.htm>