THE EDUCATION FUND
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SmartPath to College

Coping with Exams and Exam Anxiety

For many students, exam time is particularly stressful. Despite this, many students attempt to deal with this stress in ways that are counter-productive or even self-defeating; their behavior and attitudes tend to diminish their performance on exams rather than enhance it.

While there is no guarantee for an easy time on exams, there are some specific tips and guidelines that students can follow which will help them learn more efficiently during exam time.

Remember that **you are not alone**: almost everyone gets somewhat anxious at exam time!

Tips & Guidelines:

1. Try to stay on a reasonably regular schedule of reviewing, eating, sleeping, and relaxing. Start studying at least two weeks before exams begin.

2. Don't attempt to study 24 hours a day; your efficiency and capacity to retain material will rapidly decrease. Schedule blocks of time to study each subject area.

3. Don't force yourself to study beyond your normal limits of concentration. If you find yourself able to concentrate for only 30-45 minutes, study for only that period of time and then take a short break. Your concentration should return. Short and regular study periods are more productive than lengthy single sessions.

4. Eat a well-balanced diet and drink lots of water/fluids. Excessive amounts of coffee may produce confusion and even disorganization of thought processes.

5. Don't use drugs or alcohol -- they can decrease your ability to think clearly. Take medication only under the supervision of a physician.

6. Be conservative and reasonable about the demands you place on yourself. Unrealistic goals may only cause more stress and anxiety.

7. If you have a problem that you believe will interfere with taking your exams, be sure to notify your teacher or a counselor in advance of your exam.

***Source**:* Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College