

HIGHLAND I.S.D.

APRIL 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1B *FCA 7:15AM *ELEMENTARY EGG HUNTS *DIST. GOLF @ SW CC *HS TRACK @ HIGHLAND EARLY RELEASE AT 12:15PM	2A GOOD FRIDAY HOLIDAY	3
4 	5 HOLIDAY	6A *STAAR GRADES 4/7 WRITING 9TH ENG I *HS TENNIS @ BRONTE	7B	8A *STAAR GRADE 10 ENG II	9B *FCA 7:15AM *END 5TH 6WKS *4TH/5TH GRADE FRONTIER TEXAS FIELD TRIP *HS DIST. TRACK @ HERMLEIGH *JUDGING @ CANYON	10 *JUDGING @ CLARENDON
11  THIS WEEK →	12A *BEGIN 6TH 6WKS *HS DIST. TENNIS @ SNYDER *GRADES DUE AT NOON	13B	14A *HS AREA TRACK @ HERMLEIGH	15B *REG. OAP REHEARSAL	16A *REG. OAP PERFORMANCE *PTO- END OF 6WKS PARTY *JUDGING @ SOUTH PLAINS	17 *AREA JUDGING @ LUBBOCK *REG. UIL ACADEMIC @ SAN ANGELO
18	19B *ITBS GRADES 1 & 2 *TXKEA - K *REG BOYS GOLF @ QUICKSAND SAN ANGELO *REG GIRLS GOLF @ BENTWOOD CC SAN ANGELO	20A *ITBS GRADES 1 & 2 *TXKEA - K *REG BOYS GOLF @ QUICKSAND SAN ANGELO *REG GIRLS GOLF @ BENTWOOD CC SAN ANGELO	21B *ITBS GRADES 1 & 2 *TXKEA - K	22A *ITBS GRADES 1 & 2 *TXKEA - K	23B *PK/K/1ST ZOO DAY 	24 *HS REG. TRACK @ SAN ANGELO
25 *CHAMPION BAPTIST CHURCH SENIOR DAY	26A *TRANSFER PAPERWORK SENT HOME *HS REG. TENNIS @ SAN ANGELO	27B *SCHOOL BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION DAY *PK & KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION 12:30-2:30PM *HS REG. TENNIS @ SAN ANGELO	28A 	29B *STATE OAP *STATE UIL ACADEMIC MEET	30A *4-H WOOL JUDGING @ SAN ANGELO *STATE OAP *STATE UIL ACADEMIC MEET *PROGRESS REPORTS	

Understanding and Overcoming Test Anxiety

WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY?

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety. When there is pressure because of high expectations or the stakes are high, people can become so anxious that they are hindered from doing their best.

It is sometimes helpful and normal to have nervousness around testing. The energy can keep our minds alert and the arousal can help with focus. However, there is a threshold and sometimes too much anxiety can begin to impair brain functioning. When our emotional brain starts to feel fear and get activated, it can make it hard to remember what was studied and to maximize our prefrontal cortex functioning.

SYMPTOMS OF TEST ANXIETY

Test anxiety symptoms can range from mild to severe. It is possible to have mild symptoms of test anxiety and still perform well on exams. Others can feel so overwhelmed that they encounter panic attacks before or during exams. The Anxiety and Depression Association of America describes symptoms of test anxiety as physical, behavioral, cognitive, and emotional.

Physical Symptoms

Physical symptoms can range from increased heart rate, sweating, dry mouth, to shaking, fainting, panic attacks, vomiting and nausea.

Cognitive and Behavioral Symptoms

Cognitive and behavioral symptoms can include negative self-talk and cognitive distortions that lead students to avoid studying or testing situations. Challenges with focus and concentration as well as racing thoughts or rumination can be common.

Emotional Symptoms

Emotional symptoms can include low self-esteem, depressive symptoms, frustration, irritability, feeling overwhelmed and a sense of hopelessness.

CAUSES OF TEST ANXIETY

In the medical student population, test anxiety can be heightened due to the intense nature of the academic environment. Often times it is a combination of reasons that contribute to test anxiety. Here are some potential causes:

- *Perfectionistic tendencies/fear of failure.* Maladaptive perfectionism is prevalent amongst the medical student population. Connecting one's sense of worth and identity to performance can cause test anxiety.
- *Stress around testing history.* If previous test experiences have been anxiety-provoking or led to unexpected poor outcomes, this can add more anxiety with each additional testing experience.
- *Underlying anxiety.* Often times, students have a history of anxiety that can be exacerbated around testing experiences. This anxiety can contribute to one feeling like they haven't studied enough, and it

can cloud the academic journey leading to a sense of dread around studying and testing.

OVERCOMING TEST ANXIETY

Thankfully there are tools to support students in addressing and overcoming test anxiety. Each person's needs will be different based on the reasons for test anxiety. Here are some strategies:

Physical Strategies

- Get enough restful sleep, especially before the test
- Reduce caffeine intake
- Consume nutritious foods
- Get exercise and movement throughout the week
- Spend time outdoors in nature
- Take meaningful regular breaks while studying (not mindlessly scrolling through news, social media or YouTube)
- Practice mindfulness or meditation at least once a day (Headspace is a helpful app to get started)
- Practice progressive muscle relaxation

Cognitive, Behavioral and Emotional Strategies

- Understand and address **cognitive distortions**
- Remember your strengths and remind yourself of why you want to become a physician
- Take a step back and reflect on who you are outside of being a medical student
- Reconnect with hobbies you enjoy
- Make time for social connection and reach out for social support
- Ask for support and testing if you think you might have a learning disability (like ADHD)
- Connect with a professional clinician who can help you come up with a successful plan, reduce negative self-talk, and feel more hopeful before exams
- Reach out to faculty to better understand how to prepare
- Get tutoring support from our learning specialist

SUPPORT SERVICES

We are here to support you in your medical school journey and want you to succeed. Sometimes it is helpful to consult with a psychiatrist and/or to meet with a licensed therapist. We have many professional clinicians on campus and as well as in the community who are preferred providers for the Student Health Plan who are ready to support you. **See the Student Affairs webpage for counseling resources.** Student may make medical and counseling appointments without a referral or without involving the School of Medicine Dean's Office or any faculty. If you choose, you may contact Dr. Lamberton's office for suggestions for counselors.

Cherry, K. (2020) Test anxiety symptoms, causes, and treatments.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-test-anxiety-2795368>