

Did You Know? A Bimonthly Column from:
Dr. Valerie Dripchak, PhD/LCSW
Student Assistance Counselor
Room# 236 - Telephone# 236-9817

Did you know that test anxiety is common among college students?

According to the research, most students experience some level of anxiety during an exam. Some anxiety is good. It helps to enhance our performance. However, when anxiety begins to impact your success on the test, it is becoming a bigger problem. Test anxiety includes a physical reaction, where your body releases the adrenaline hormone. This may cause some symptoms like increased perspiring, pounding heart and rapid breathing. These sensations may be mild or more severe.

Test anxiety is not the same as doing poorly on a certain test because your mind is on something else. Most students realize that having your focus on something else can also interfere with your concentration and prevent you from doing your best.

Who is likely to experience test anxiety? Students who worry a lot or who tend to be perfectionists are more likely to have trouble with test anxiety. Another category of students who tend to experience test anxiety are those individuals who aren't prepared for tests, but who care about doing well. These students may not have studied enough or find the material too difficult.

What can you do? Here are some suggestions for you to try:

1. **Be prepared for the exam.** Learn the material thoroughly and organize the information that you will need to take the exam.* Seek out help for difficult courses.
2. **Watch what you are thinking.** Strive for a state of concentration and not worry.* Accept mistakes as a way of learning.

3. **Take care of yourself.** Develop good study habits and strategies.*Learn ways to calm down.*
4. **During the exam...** Read the directions carefully. Budget your time.* If you go blank on a question, skip it and go on to the next one. Don't panic.

If you need help in managing your test anxiety, you may want to contact *your student assistance counselor. The services are free and confidential to all UConn Waterbury students.*

*There are handouts outside the Student Assistance Office in each of these starred areas that are available to you. Help yourself to them.