

## Mental Health Information for Parents from FSUS

# TEST ANXIETY

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety related to test taking; similar to anxiety right before an important sport game, speech, or other similar life events.

It is **not** anxiety caused by other stressors in the student's life unrelated to the test (e.g., death of a loved one).

## Symptoms



### Physical

- Sweating
- Shaking
- Butterflies in stomach
- Increased heart rate
- Dry mouth
- Nausea
- Possibly fainting



### Behavioral

- Avoidant behavior
- Fidgeting
- Sleeplessness
- Substance abuse



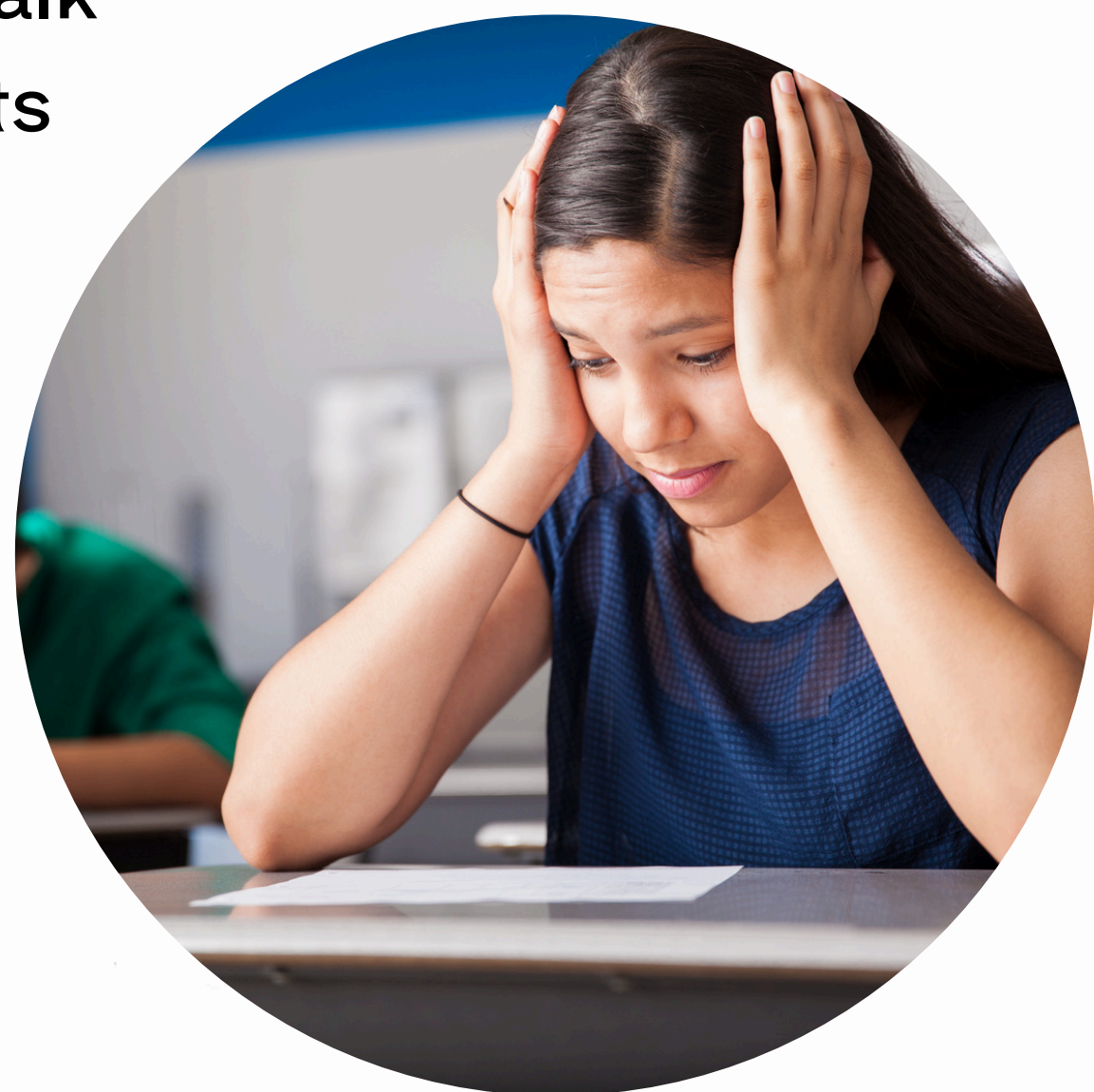
### Mental

- Forgetting material you had studied
- Catastrophizing thoughts
- Poor concentration
- Negative self-talk
- Racing thoughts



### Emotional

- Anger
- Depression
- Hopelessness
- Decreased self-esteem



## **Mental Health Information for Parents from FSUS**

### **Causes**

- Fear of failure
- Lack of preparation
- Poor testing history

### **Princeton Review's Top 10 Ways to Overcome Test Anxiety**

1. **Be prepared** - study, review difficult concepts and possible questions.
2. **Get a good night's sleep** - good rest will help with mood and energy levels
3. **Fuel up** - a nutritional breakfast will provide a good source of energy throughout the day; avoid foods that can lead to sugar crashes.
4. **Arrive early** - the fear of being late will only increase your anxiety the day of the test; prepare everything you need to take the night before.
5. **Keep a positive mental attitude** - challenge negative self-talk with positive statements.
6. **Read directions and questions carefully** - slow down and stay focused.
7. **Just start** - dive into the test after reviewing the instructions; you can always go back and review what you answered.
8. **Focus only on yourself** - don't pay attention to what anyone else is doing; it doesn't matter if the first person finished while you are still working.
9. **Watch the clock** - mentally allocate how much time you will need for each question and try to keep that pace.
10. **Focus on calm breathing and positive thoughts** - deep breathing can calm racing thoughts and help relax your body, protecting against those anxious feelings.

### **Resources**

<https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/children/test-anxiety>

<https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/test-anxiety>

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

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/test-anxiety.html>