



Dec 13, 2017

## Tips for Staying Healthy During Exam Time

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It's exam time and so many students are stressed out and studying hard to get results. We can all agree that exam times are like no other times and sometimes students become ill. Here are some tips to help keep you healthy during exams.

### Get enough sleep

Your 'study style' may mean you stay awake all night before an exam or stay up to the early hours of the morning each day that they study. But if you don't get about 6-7 hours' sleep at night then you are depriving your health – including your ability to study effectively. Getting

enough sleep boost your memories, helps you focus and keeps you alert. Poor sleep also makes you release the stress hormone cortisol which adds to the stress and your metabolism also slows down. The hormone ghrelin increases and your appetite will increase – this is why you get hungrier when you don't get enough sleep. All this will lead to unnecessary weight gain and poor concentration.

## **Eat healthily**

When you are stressed it may be tempting to eat at the local burger joint to 'treat' yourself or eat junk food at home but these foods will make you feel slow, heavy, bloated and tired. They are not designed to fuel your brain, something you desperately need when studying. Remember, comfort or stress eating will not help you - it will make you feel guilty and slow your brain down. Instead try to eat 5-6 smaller meals a day that is filled with whole grains, fruits, healthy fats, vegetables and lean meats and proteins so that you always have energy and don't go hungry. Some good brain foods are blueberries, pumpkin seeds, spinach, legumes, and nuts.

## **Keep moving!**

If you have a regular gym or workout routine, then don't let it slip off during exam time. You may feel that you are too busy for your regular training but you can go for a quick walk instead. Exercising releases chemicals in your brains called endorphins which make you feel happy. Even if you don't feel too happy about getting up, you will definitely feel better when you have finished! There have been several studies that have shown that exercise can actually improve concentration and your ability to process information, so a quick burst of fresh air could help you stay alert and study better. If you are really worried about cutting precious study time, go for a walk with a friend taking the same exam - this way you can revise while you walk!

## **Plan your time**

Heading into exam prep without a plan is going to make it so much harder for you and could potentially impact on your end results. It is important to know what you are doing and how you are doing. Make sure to include room in your schedule for all topics, a walk or other form of

exercise, relaxation/quiet time, eating and sleeping. When studying, it is important to use your time wisely - you can't afford to be over stressing and sending yourself into a panic.

Good luck!

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