



Volume 5...Issue 2



Bladder Chatter

TRU student health & wellness newsletter

Exam Time is Upon Us...

OK people...exam time is almost here. Are you ready? This issue will give you some tips and strategies on how to take care of yourself, study and manage anxiety during this busy and stressful time. Remember that exams are important, but taking care of yourself is also imperative if you want to do well on exams!!



Get a good sleep before your exam!!



Many students stay up too late studying the night before an exam. This is a bad idea, in general. If you had a big game to play the next day, would you think it was a good idea to stay up all night? Studies indicate the lack of even one or two hours of sleep can reduce your effectiveness and responsiveness by as much as 25%. Since most of you already will have a sleep deficit from staying up late previously, this can be a serious problem. One study that tested sleep-deprived drivers showed that their reaction times could be as diminished as those of intoxicated drivers. That is, it was as bad for them as driving drunk! Do you think it would be good to take an exam while drunk? If not, be sure you get your sleep.

<http://www.math.union.edu/~dpvc/welcome.html>

A second study showed that a sleepless night had an effect not only the day after, but again three days after (apparently the second day was OK), so be aware that if you have an exam on Friday, then staying up all night on Tuesday may affect that!

Another recent study indicates that sleep is a crucial component in memory; that the material one studies must be "locked in" by a period of sleep. Furthermore, after a certain time with no sleep, no new information can be retained. The old joke about "Can we stop? My brain is full." seems to be true; at some point, your capacity to add new information is seriously reduced until you experience actual sleep. And that's not just doing something else for a break, but actual, honest sleep. **Don't neglect this!**



TRU WELLNESS CENTRE
LIVE TRULY WELL

This newsletter is sponsored and published by the TRU Wellness Centre. Questions or comments? Please contact Chelsea at 828-5010 or ccorsi@tru.ca for more info

Check us out at www.tru.ca/wellness for more health and wellness info!

Bladder Chatter p.2

Guidelines for Test Taking

Stay Healthy and Alert

Get enough sleep and eat healthy and regular meals on the day of the test. Don't risk being drowsy, hungry, or low on energy.

Don't Over-study

You probably know the material better than you think-you've covered it over a long time! Trust yourself. Study enough so that you feel confident, but don't cram to the point of feeling overloaded.

Plan Ahead

Make sure you know the date, time, and location of the test.

Relax

This is sometimes easier said than done, but you can do it. Focus your mind. Take your time. Remember that you know the material and feel confident that you will complete the test in the time allowed.

Practice

Here is a summary of the best basics to remember as you take the test:

- Look over the whole test before you start. Notice the amount of questions so you can determine how much time to allow for each question and how many points each question is worth. You will also get a general idea of the scope of the test.
- Read directions carefully. There are important clues in the directions about how to complete the test.
- Answer the easiest questions first. This "warm-up" will give you confidence and extra time to spend on the tougher questions.
- When in doubt, go with your first guess. It is often fairly accurate.
- Don't waste time pondering. If you get stuck, go on to another question and come back when you are ready (if you have time).
- Check over your answers before you hand in your test. Don't change answers unless you are positive you have made a mistake.

Be Kind to Yourself

Don't be hard on yourself if you feel like you failed the test. You did the best you could do at that time. And you don't yet know the results for sure! If you do receive disappointing results, take it easy. You are not a failure simply because you fail one test. You are still you, with as much value and worth as you had before. You simply didn't do well on that test. Look at what went wrong-whether you got nervous or didn't know the material well enough-and think about how to improve for the next time.

Source: Carter, C and Izumo, G., "Career Tool Kit: Skills for Success".



BRAIN FOOD...Don't forget to eat nutritious food during exam time. While it is easy to grab something quick, the brain works better when nourished with fruits & veggies, whole grains, proteins, and vitamins and minerals! So grab a handful of almonds versus chips if you are needing a quick fix for tummy rumblings!

Quick Relaxation Exercise

- Loosen your clothing and get comfortable.
- Tighten the muscles in your toes. Hold for a count of 10. Relax and enjoy the sensation of release from tension.
- Flex the muscles in your feet. Hold for a count of 10. Relax.
- Move slowly up through your body- legs, abdomen, back, neck, face- contracting and relaxing muscles as you go.



TRU WELLNESS CENTRE
LIVE TRULY WELL



Bladder Chatter p.3

Exam Anxiety

Many students describe experiencing some of the following symptoms of anxiety before or during an exam.

PHYSICAL

fatigue
chest pain
headaches
upset stomach
muscle tension
rapid heart rate
light-headedness

BEHAVIOURAL

disturbed sleep
not attending class
procrastination
increased alcohol use
increased caffeine use
distractibility
restlessness

EMOTIONAL

stressed
worried
irritable
frustrated
confused
disoriented
overwhelmed

Some students confuse the symptoms and consequences of exam anxiety with other learning and attention problems. If you do have difficulties with learning and/or attention, you may be more likely to experience anxiety during exam preparation and the writing of exams.

**If you experience exam anxiety, make an appointment with one of the TRU Counsellors! They can help you work on this issue!
CALL 250-828-5023
FREE and CONFIDENTIAL!**



Smile and the world smiles with you!



TRU WELLNESS CENTRE
LIVE TRULY WELL

Preparing for and writing exams are among the most important and stressful aspects of University life. A certain amount of test anxiety is normal. It can actually improve your academic performance by helping you concentrate on the task at hand and stay motivated and alert.

Some students experience more severe anxiety that can be counterproductive. Research has demonstrated that highly anxious students tend to receive lower scores on exams than do less anxious students, even when ability and preparation are the same. Students who experience intense anxiety may become overwhelmed by their feelings of tension and worry. They become less able to concentrate and are easily distracted from the exam process. These students sometimes report "freezing" or "feeling blocked" when preparing for or writing an exam. If the anxiety you experience interferes with your academic performance it is a problem that should be addressed.

Sources

Gall, M., & Gall, J. (1988). *Making the Grade*. Eugene Oregon: Damien Publishers.

Fleet, J., Goodchild, F., & Zajchowski, R. (1990). *Learning for Success*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.



Hi there...for those of you who don't know me or haven't seen me waddle around campus, I won't be back after the Christmas holidays as I will be on Maternity Leave for a year. My replacement will be starting on January 5, 2009, so please visit the website www.tru.ca/wellness for winter events in January. Take care and have a wonderful holiday! I will miss working with all of you students and employees on campus!!

Chelsea Corsi, TRU Wellness Coordinator

Bladder Chatter p.4

Managing Exam Anxiety

Gall, M., & Gall, J. (1988). *Making the Grade*. Eugene Oregon: Damien Publishers.

Fleet, J., Goodchild, F., & Zajchowski, R. (1990). *Learning for Success*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

- Develop strong study skills. Learn to organize your time, take effective notes, identify critical material from lectures and texts, and use strategies to improve memory.
- Determine due dates and the exam schedule for each course early in the term so that you can plan accordingly. For example, arrange to complete your term paper such that you have adequate time to study for the midterm.
- Form a study group. Plan study sessions with classmates to review class notes and to help one another generate potential exam questions and formulate answers.
- Over-prepare for your exams. Knowing the material "inside out" will increase your confidence and help reduce anxiety. For this technique to be successful you need to organize your schedule so you have ample time to prepare for exams.
- Gather the supplies you will need for your exam. Don't wait until the last minute to look for your calculator or ruler. The less you have to worry about prior to the exam, the better.
- Practice visualizing yourself writing the exam, staying calm and doing well.
- Get a good night's rest before the exam. For most students, this is essential to good exam performance.
- Be on time. Rushing to an exam or arriving late will increase your anxiety. You may want to double-check the exam time and location in advance.

- Be aware of your thinking. Are you telling yourself "I'm going to fail," "I always blank on exams," or do you say "I can write this exam," "I am going to stay calm"? Positive thinking can help you respond to stressful situations more effectively.
- Choose a seat in the exam room where you will be comfortable. For example, avoid sitting by the door if there will be noise in the hallway. Sitting near the front may help you to hear the examiner's instructions more clearly and be less affected by the activities and progress of others.
- Focus on the present. Try to avoid thinking about past or future exams.
- Take the time to read exam questions carefully.
- Answer exam items you are sure of before responding to more difficult items. This builds confidence and gives you a sense of accomplishment.
- After finishing an exam double-check your answers.
- Try not to pay attention to what other students are doing. Once you have worked out time estimates for different sections of an exam, stick to your plan. Don't worry if other students finish before you.
- After writing an exam, evaluate your effort. Notice any areas of difficulty (e.g. responding to essay questions) and seek assistance (e.g. speak to your professor, enrol in the Study Skills Program, attend the Writing Centre).
- Give yourself credit. Acknowledge your successes and willingness to improve your skills.



quitnow.ca

1-877-455-2233



Are you interested in quitting tobacco and winning BIG prizes? If so, QuitNow Services and the BC Lung Association are offering a quitting contest with over **\$20,000** in prizes!! To enter and find out more, go to www.quitnow.ca TODAY!!