

Exam Stress :

Have exams coming up? Sometimes the pressure you feel can help keep you focused, other times it can cause stress. Check out these tips to help you cope with stress during exam time.



What does exam stress look like?

Some signs of stress include: Feeling confused

Losing touch with friends

Feeling moody and low

Having trouble making decisions

Feeling overwhelmed

Lack of motivation to do anything

Trouble sleeping or getting out of bed

Tense muscles or headaches

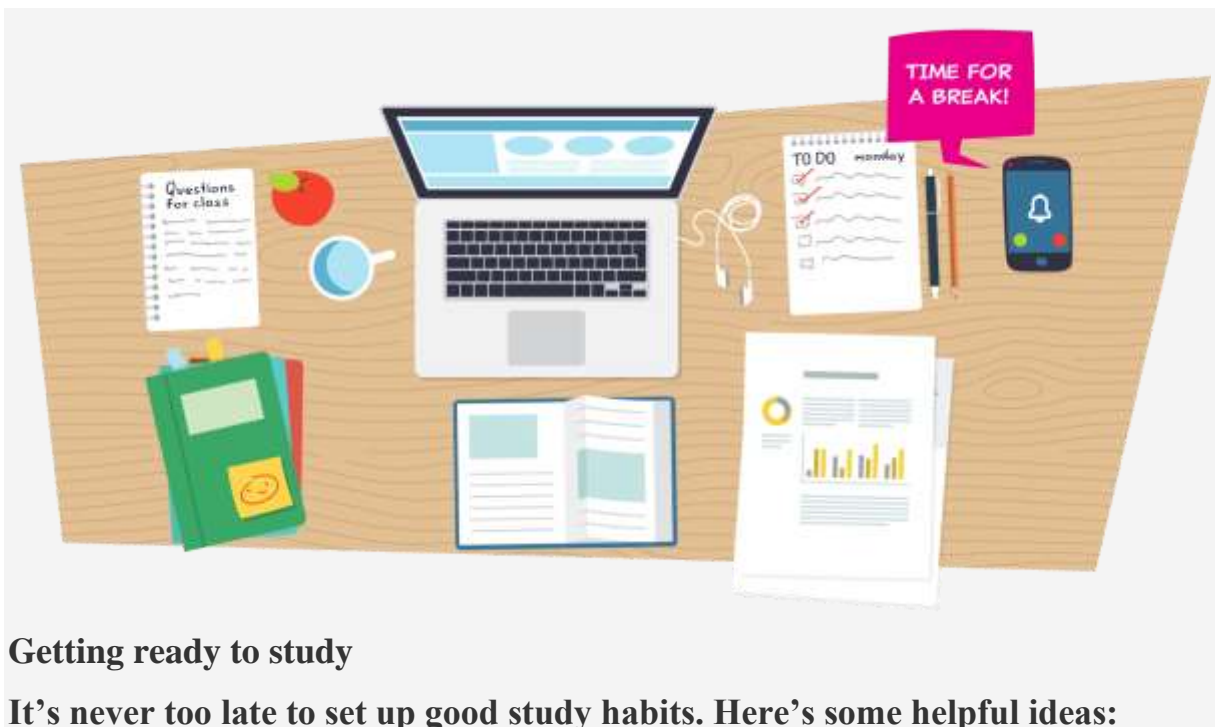
Having an upset stomach or feeling sick

Fidgeting, nail biting, teeth grinding

Why do people experience exam stress? Worry they might fail

Don't feel prepared

Want to do really well
Don't have much time to study
Need to get a certain result
Don't think they will do well
Find it hard to understand what they're studying
Feel pressure from family to get good marks
Feel they need to compete with others
Have other things happening in their life



Getting ready to study

It's never too late to set up good study habits. Here's some helpful ideas:

Find a **quiet place** to study without distractions.

Set-up your study space. Make sure it's not too cluttered and has everything you might need.

Find out as much as you can about the exam so you can prepare.

Ask your teacher if you're unsure of what will be tested.

Learn to make **'mind maps'** and use them to collect ideas and thoughts, use bright colours to help remember important links.

Make a **plan** of what you want to work on in each study session. Break it down into small tasks and work on one task at a time.

Take regular short breaks – use this time to have a drink, get something to eat or play with a pet.

Ask for help - If you're having trouble with something you're studying ask a teacher, friend, sibling or parent to help.

Tips to help while studying

Try these tips and tricks: Stick to a routine by eating and sleeping at around the same time each day

Get a good night's sleep. This gives your brain time to recharge and remember what you've learnt.

Give yourself mini rewards once you achieve your study goals – watch a TV show or go for a run

Keep focused on your study – don't let other stuff like friendship worries distract you.

Avoid junk food - it will bring a sudden burst of energy and then fall away quickly leaving you feeling worn-out.

Eat a well-balanced diet - lots of fresh fruit, vegetables, cereals, grains, nuts and protein are all good for the brain and energy levels.

Allow yourself time to rest – try out some relaxation activities like deep breathing, meditation or listening to music.

Cut back on energy drinks they can increase nerves. Drink lots of water instead!

Ideas for exam day

Here's some tips to help exam day go smoothly:

Work out what you need to take with you on exam day and organise this the night before.

Eat a good, light breakfast – this will help with energy and concentration.

Go to the toilet before the exam starts.

If you feel yourself getting worried before your exam - spend some time focussing on your breathing.

When you sit down to do your exam, take time to slow your breathing and relax.

Read through the exam paper carefully. Underline key words and instructions.

Work out how long you have for each question or section.

Aim to have time to re-read answers through and to make any changes.

Work on the questions that you find easiest first.

Looking after yourself

If you're juggling lots of things like school, chores, sports and friends - it's easy to forget to look after yourself.



Keeping things in balance and learning to manage stress

You've probably heard people talk about having a 'healthy lifestyle'. It involves more than just eating healthy and exercising.

It also means:

Looking after your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing

Knowing when things are getting out of balance and what to do about it

Being able to keep up with responsibilities while also looking after yourself

When things get out of balance and you feel stressed out, it can start to affect your health in negative ways.

Get plenty of sleep :

It's easy to give up sleep when you need to study, but sleep is really important for staying healthy!

It's the only part of the day where your body and mind get a chance to rest and recharge. Sleep actually helps with learning and memory which makes it really important for school and study.

Eat a well-balanced diet :

What you eat can help you feel healthier, stronger and ready to take on any stress that comes your way. Eating a balanced diet provides you with the right type of fuel for your body.

It's important to develop healthy eating habits as not eating well can put yourself at risk of:

Unhealthy changes in your weight

Mood swings

Reduced mental health

Physical illness

If you're trying to eat healthily, a few simple tips are:

Drink plenty of water

Limit junk food

Eat more vegetables, fruit and protein

Eat regular meals

Don't skip meals

Avoid eating when bored

Pay attention to how much you eat

Get your body moving

Exercising regularly is part of having a healthy lifestyle.

Coping with emotions :

Whether you're feeling angry, sad, frustrated, lonely, or anxious - it's important to have some healthy ways to cope with these painful emotions



Learning to cope with painful emotions

Some emotions are easier to deal with than others. When things feel really difficult, it's sometimes hard to cope.

Learning to cope with these emotions in a positive way can help you live a healthier and happier life.

Talking can help!

Express your feelings and thoughts by talking with someone you trust:

Let your emotions out physically

Let your body help you express your feelings by:

Going for a walk or run

Squeezing a stress ball

Screaming into a pillow

Singing and dancing

Ripping up a newspaper

Playing a sport

Doing some chores

Crying

Try some relaxation strategies :

Help your mind and body to refocus by trying some:

Deep breathing

Meditation

Mindfulness

Muscle relaxation

Distract yourself

If your emotions are too strong to express in other ways, try to distract yourself by:

Watching TV or a movie

Looking up funny videos or memes

Doing something you enjoy

Playing a game

Learning something new

Talking or hanging out with friends

