

EXAM STRESS: 6 WAYS TO COPE



1. GET ORGANIZED

- Prioritize your tasks and time. Make a schedule of what needs to get done and when.
- Tidy up your work space. Experts say a neat desk can make you feel more in control of your work load and less stressed.

2. EXERCISE

As the time gets closer to exams, you may feel like you don't have time to go to the gym, but studies show that physical activity can help alleviate mental stress.

Some alternative ways to be active:

- Take the stairs.
- Walk briskly for 20 minutes during a study break.
- Put on your favorite song and jump around and dance for 3 minutes.

3. SLEEP WELL

- Try get enough sleep at night (8 hours for the average adult) instead of napping during the day.
- If anxiety is keeping you awake at night, check out a Web site on sleep health:
<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/~dement/>
- Napping tends to disrupt normal sleeping patterns, but if you must, nap only before 3:00 p.m. and for less than an hour.

4. EAT WELL

You may not feel like you have time to eat or cook a healthy meal. But eating out can be just as time consuming as cooking and more costly. Some time saving meal ideas:

- Buy a bag of salad. Toss the greens with tuna, chicken or beans.
- Store cooked pasta or rice in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Add it to frozen vegetables, sauces, beans or canned soup for quick meals.
- Share meals with a friend or partner. That way only one person cooks (hopefully not you!). After you pass your exams, you can cook for them.

5. TALK TO PEOPLE

- Gripe with others taking exams.
- Talk to colleagues who have gone through exams and survived.
- Call a friend or family member outside of KU. They may put things into perspective for you.
- If you're feeling really badly, consider seeking professional counseling at Counseling and Psychological Services at Watkins Health Center.

6. SCHEDULE MANDATORY FUN

Allow yourself guilt-free relaxation each day.

- Reward a day's work with ½ hour of watching TV or reading something other than your list.
- Schedule in a few hours of recreation each week. See a matinee, walk around a museum, sit by the ocean or hear a concert.

