

Natural Help 4...

Test Anxiety



What is Test Anxiety?

Test anxiety is a type of **anxiety that can affect a test taker before, during, or after a test**. It is an issue that many students deal with at one time or another.

Anxiety is a normal human feeling that is part of life, and can often serve as a *good* form of adrenaline-- for instance, butterflies before making a speech, taking a test, or performing on stage. However, there are methods **how to overcome nervousness and anxiety when they interfere with performance**.

Test anxiety can also be **experienced at varying levels**. Slight exam stress can help by providing alertness, readiness, and help you to concentrate. However, **excessive exam anxiety can result in stress and negatively affect performance**.

Test anxiety, just like other types of anxiety, tends to occur like a wave.

It will increase from the time you first recognize it, come to a peak, and then naturally subside. If test-taking anxiety persists and becomes problematic, it is a good idea to seek assistance from the school counselor or other professional resource available in your area. **Calming nerves through learned techniques** can ease **common nervous tension** associated with this type of anxiety, and can help greatly in **overcoming test anxiety**.

Two Types of Anxiety

Anticipatory Anxiety

This refers to distress experienced while studying and when thinking about what might happen when you take a test. This could make it almost impossible to concentrate and commit facts to memory.

Situational Anxiety

This form of anxiety occurs while taking a test or assessment like an oral or dance exam. This can cause physical distress, emotional upset, and concentration difficulties-- all affecting your performance.

Diagnosing Test Anxiety

Exam anxiety is a fairly common condition among students of all ages, and while it can often be diagnosed by experts, **the sufferer is usually already acutely aware of the condition**. A useful way **how to overcome nervousness and anxiety** is to take note of triggers that create tension.

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Diagnosing exam stress involves charting the **physical, mental, and emotional reactions** experienced when anticipating a test, when taking the test, and after the test has been completed. This also includes thoughts on performance.

Generally, if a person **feels more stressed, strained, or anxious** when taking a test than at any other normal time in their life, then they are probably suffering from [test anxiety](#).

Recognizing the Symptoms of Test Anxiety

Symptoms of [test anxiety](#) vary from person to person. Some students are mildly affected and exhibit few symptoms, while others experience severe reactions.

Symptoms of exam anxiety may include the following:

Before the test:

- Crying easily, feeling irritable, or getting frustrated quickly
- Extreme nervousness, irritability, dread, fear, or hopelessness
- Fear of something 'bad' happening before arriving to take the exam
- Drastic appetite changes - overeating, or skipping breakfast and lunch
- Trouble sleeping the night before

During the test:

- Inability to remember facts that were known before the test
- Excessive yawning (body's method of increasing oxygen to the [brain](#))
- Upset stomach, asthma attacks, headaches, perspiration, or high blood pressure
- Mock indifference: "I don't care – this test doesn't matter anyway!"
- Mind races or feels dull or "muddy"
- Trouble organizing thoughts, feeling confused or panicked
- Trouble reading and understanding questions
- Trouble following directions
- Making many careless errors on a test
- Feeling tension as exam is being passed out
- Physical symptoms: increased heart rate, shortness of breath, perspiring, dry mouth, muscle tension, headaches, vomiting, or fainting
- Negative thinking
- Blanking out on information studied

After the test:

- Feelings of guilt, anger, depression, or blaming performance on others
- Recalling information upon leaving the classroom or a short period later that was blanked out during the exam
- Frustration with grade on the exam despite thorough preparation
- Pretending the test meant nothing, and discard the result as meaningless

[Test anxiety](#) is more common than most students realize, and the symptoms are generally the same for almost all students who experience it.

Anxiety is your mind or body's natural response to what it views as a threat. **When**



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Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



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Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

threatened, your body triggers a number of physical and mental reactions.

These reactions can be organized into three categories, and when combined, create a state within which [test anxiety](#) flourishes. Each category is connected to the other, so anything that can be done to lessen one reaction will lessen the impact of the other two categories.

There are **three categories of reactions**:

- Physical (somatic)
- Emotional
- Mental (cognitive)

1. Physical (somatic)

This is the easiest place to start. These symptoms are the **most observable**, both to the person suffering with test anxiety and to those around them – the body's reactions to anxiety are hard to miss!

Common **physical responses** to [test anxiety](#):

- Changes in body temperature
- Breathing problems (tightness in chest, breathing too quickly)
- Muscular responses (stiffness in muscles)
- Abdominal problems (an upset stomach, feeling queasy, nausea)
- Headache/sensory responses (dizziness, light headedness, blurred vision)
- Cardiovascular reactions (palpitations or tightness in chest, an increase in blood pressure)

There are many other related physical symptoms associated with [test anxiety](#) which include skin rashes, changes in eating patterns (eating too much or too little), an increase or decrease in activity level, sleep disorders (insomnia, nightmares, or in severe cases of phobia, night terrors). When a few or all of these responses occur during a test, it's easy to understand how test performance suffers.

2. Emotional

Emotional responses can include:

- Mood changes
- Emotionally unstable responses
- Feelings of losing control

These **emotional factors can literally override other bodily functions** and can easily lead to a student avoiding a task completely due to a panic attack or a full-fledged phobia. It is with these reactions in mind that you may ask yourself: "What good is it if I can memorize and learn a huge amount of information, but I can't remember it during the test because of my emotions?"

The ability to **control and normalize emotion is the key to overcoming exam stress.**

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3. Mental (cognitive)

Mental responses to [test anxiety](#) include:

- Irrational thinking
- Feelings of failure or rejection
- Forgetfulness and memory loss
- Loss of concentration and focus

This series of symptoms is **due to negative thinking** rather than positive thinking taking control in the [brain](#). The result can best be described as students **making themselves 'sick' with worry due to irrational thought**, which then strips them of confidence and leads to an inability to concentrate and focus.

Are Certain People More Prone to Test Anxiety?

While anyone can get anxious before taking an important test, **people who worry a lot or who are perfectionists are more likely to have trouble with [test anxiety](#)**. This is because people with these qualities sometimes find it hard to accept mistakes they might make, or to get anything less than a perfect score. In this way, **even without meaning to, they put added pressure on themselves**. [Test anxiety](#) is bound to thrive in a situation like this.

Students who aren't prepared for tests but who care about doing well are also likely to experience exam stress. **People can feel unprepared for tests for several reasons**: they may not have studied enough, they may find the material difficult, or perhaps they feel tired because they didn't get enough sleep the night before.

Students who experience [test anxiety](#) are often masters at avoidance and may also have a problem with procrastination. They often avoid studying, and then a day or two before the test they start to worry that they have not studied enough. **Procrastination also leads to last-minute cramming**, which can result in the information becoming disorganized in the student's brain.

This **pattern of avoidance creates a vicious cycle**: procrastination leads to last-minute cramming, which leads to anxiety, which leads to self-doubt, which leads to excessive anxiety during a testing situation, which may lead to the inability to remember or think logically.

What Causes Test Anxiety?

These are **many obstacles that stand in the way of [overcoming test anxiety](#)**, but the condition can be properly managed with the right care. It may be **past experiences of blanking out on tests** or the inability to readily retrieve answers to questions that can bring on an episode of [test anxiety](#). It could also be a **lack of preparation for an exam** which is a real reason to be worried about test performance.

Errors in time management, poor study habits, failure to properly organize material, and cramming the night before the exam are also likely to increase test anxiety.



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If a test has been adequately prepared for, the precipitating anxiety may result from **negative thinking and worries**.

Focusing on past test performances, how friends and other classmates are doing, or the negative consequences of doing poorly are also major factors contributing to [test anxiety](#).

Students who experience [test anxiety](#) tend to be the type of **people who put a lot of pressure on themselves to perform well**. They often have unusually high expectations for themselves and, many times, have been very good students in the past.

When these students begin to experience low grades for the first time, usually in college, **their image of themselves as a smart person begins to erode**. They then put pressure on themselves to perform better, but often put off studying longer than they should. This initiates a **cycle of self-doubt and irrational belief** that can result in high anxiety levels during testing situations.

Common Causes of Text Anxiety

Here are the most common causes of text anxiety:

- Learned behavior
- The direct association of grades and personal worth
- A feeling of a lack of control
- A teacher embarrassing a student
- Being placed into an academic position above one's ability
- A fear of alienation from parents, family, and friends due to poor grades
- Timed tests and the fear of not finishing the test, even if one can do all the problems

Ineffective study methods and procrastination can lead to anxiety and a lowered self-image. Poor performance in a course can lead to increased pressure on oneself, especially if the outcome of a test or of a course is very important. A single experience of extreme [test anxiety](#) can leave a student uncertain if it will occur again.

Focusing on the bad things that could happen also fuels [test anxiety](#). For example, someone worrying about doing poorly might think thoughts like, "What if I forget everything I know?" or "What if the test is too hard?"

Too many thoughts like these leave no mental space for thinking about the test questions. People with [test anxiety](#) can also feel stressed out by their physical reaction and think things like, "What if I throw up?" or "Oh no, my hands are shaking."

The more a person focuses on the bad things that could happen, the stronger the feeling of anxiety becomes. This makes the test-taker feel worse, and because his or her head is full of distracting thoughts and fears, it can increase the possibility that they will under-perform on the test.

Help for Test Anxiety

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Test anxiety can be a real problem, especially when the stresses reach a height where the nervousness takes over and the test taker cannot even focus on the test questions and do their best work. However, there are **steps you can take to keep test anxiety at a manageable level and overcome nervousness.**

Traditional strategies such as **developing improved studying and test-taking skills** can make a significant difference. For example, students can learn classroom note-taking and graphic-organization techniques to assist them in better preparing for tests, thus **calming nerves.**

Along with study skills, students can be **taught effective study habits for tests**, which can be a positive first step in [overcoming test anxiety](#). Study habits have to do with planning (how, when, and where you study), time management, and organizational skills.

Everything takes time and practice, and **learning how to overcome nervousness and anxiety** is no different. Although it will not disappear overnight, **facing and dealing with test anxiety** will help you learn **stress management** and overcome nervousness, which can prove to be a valuable skill in many situations besides taking tests.

Of course, taking care of your health - such as **getting enough sleep, exercise, and healthy food** before a test - can help keep your mind working at its best. Students who get a full eight hours sleep the night before a test are more likely to figure out the problems than those who stay awake the entire night before studying.

The good news for students who experience [test anxiety](#) is that it may be easily conquered if they are **willing to follow some guidelines and practice some well-established techniques.** Research indicates that when students have tools and strategies that build both emotional skills and healthy physical habits, **overcoming test anxiety and its associated symptoms is attainable.** As a result, they improve their ability to prepare for and perform on exams.

The most frequently mentioned strategies address the following areas:

- Relaxation
- Knowledge of testing conditions
- Adequate preparation through improvement of test-taking and study skills
- Effective health habits, exercise, and good nutrition
- Monitoring of thinking patterns and positive self-talk

Treatment Options for Test Anxiety

[Test anxiety](#) is often treated using **conventional prescription medicine.** While there is a place for prescription medication, in certain cases of [test anxiety](#), careful **consideration and caution should be taken regarding possible side effects.**

There are also **alternative treatment options** available for adults with [test anxiety](#) that can help in calming nerves and [overcoming nervousness.](#) Even making simple **changes in diet, sleep, exercise and routine** can help. Trying more



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involved approaches like incorporating relaxation therapies, from guided imagery, meditation techniques, to yoga can be beneficial.

There are also many **herbal and homeopathic remedies** which can help maintain harmony, health, and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system -- **without side effects or sedation**. These products are known for their supportive function in maintaining brain, [nervous system](#), and circulatory health, in addition to overall well-being.

In today's modern world, daily stresses and a fast-paced lifestyle can take their toll. **Alternative treatments offer a natural alternative to prescription drugs** (that often have serious side effects and that may prove very costly). Alternative treatment for anxiety can include a variety of approaches.

Alternative therapies often provide benefits not available from conventional medicine such as:

- Patient empowerment
- Alternative methods of condition management
- Treatment methods that support the systemic model of health
- Stress-reduction services
- Other preventive health services that are not typically a part of conventional medicine

In alternative medicine, a holistic approach to healing recognizes that a person's **emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical elements comprise a system**. Natural remedies attempt to treat the whole person in its context, concentrating on the **cause of the illness as well as symptoms**.

Examples of such holistic therapies include acupuncture, Ayurveda, Chinese medicine, homeopathy, Indian head massage, naturopathic medicine, Qi Gong, Reiki, and reflexology. They usually do not originate from the Western medical-scientific tradition.

Holistic living may be defined as simple, spiritual, purposeful, peaceful and productive living, with moderation in food intake, adequate exercise, positive thinking, and a positive attitude towards life. Holistic living is the art of living in **harmony with nature with concern to the whole universe** – including using all that nature has to offer as a natural medicine chest!

Rather than treating problems in isolation, naturopaths prefer to **take a holistic look at the individual and encompass a variety of factors** to include diet, lifestyle, personality type, surroundings, and emotional elements – thereby **supporting the health of the individual as a whole**.

Natural remedies have been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years to support the healthy functioning of the body, helping to encourage normal and efficient functioning of all the body systems. In more recent times, **research has confirmed** this traditional wisdom in [maintaining calm nerves](#) and [overcoming test anxiety](#).

Meditation and mindfulness training are thought to be beneficial in individuals with [test anxiety](#). Hydrotherapy is useful to some anxious patients

because it promotes general relaxation of the [nervous system](#). Yoga, aikido, T'ai chi, and dance therapy help people work with the physical, as well as the emotional, tensions that either promote anxiety or are created by the anxiety.

Homeopathy and traditional Chinese medicine **approach anxiety as a symptom of a systemic disorder**. Homeopathic practitioners select a remedy based on other associated symptoms and the patient's general constitution. Chinese medicine regards anxiety as a blockage of *qi* (or vital force) inside the patient's body that is most likely to affect the lungs and large intestine meridian flow.

The practitioner of Chinese medicine chooses acupuncture point locations and/or herbal therapy to move the qi and **re-balance the entire system** in relation to the lung and large intestine.

Relaxation Techniques Used to Relieve Test Anxiety

There are both **short-term and long-term relaxation response techniques** that help control emotional (somatic) and worry (cognitive) exam anxiety. Once these procedures are learned, the relaxation response will take the place of an anxiety response.

Tensing and Relaxing Method

1. Put your feet flat on the floor.
2. With your hands, grab underneath the chair.
3. Push down with your feet and pull up on your chair at the same time for about five seconds.
4. Relax for five to ten seconds.

Repeat the procedure two or three times, and relax all your muscles except the ones that are actually used to take the test.

The Palming Method

1. Close and cover your eyes using the center of the palms of your hands.
2. Prevent your hands from touching your eyes by resting the lower parts of your palms on your cheekbones and placing your fingers on your forehead. Your eyeballs must not be touched, rubbed, or handled in any way.
3. Think of some real or imaginary relaxing scene. Mentally visualize this scene, and picture the scene as if you were actually there, looking through your own eyes.
4. Visualize this relaxing scene for one to two minutes.

The Deep Breathing Method

1. Sit straight up in your chair, in a good posture position.

2. Slowly inhale through your nose.
3. As you inhale, first fill the lower section of your lungs and work your way up to the upper part of your lungs.
4. Hold your breath for a few seconds, then exhale slowly through your mouth.
5. Wait a few seconds and repeat the cycle.

The Thought-Stopping Technique

Silently shout to yourself, "Stop!" or "Stop thinking about that!" After your *silent shout*, either relax yourself or repeat one of your positive self-talk statements.

You may have to *shout* to yourself several times during a test or while doing homework to control negative self-talk! After every 'shout', use a different relaxation technique/scene or positive self-talk statement.

Thought-stopping works because it interrupts the worry before it can cause high anxiety or negative emotions. During the interruption, you can replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk. Students with high worry anxiety should practice this technique three days to one week before taking a test.

Tips for Controlling an Episode of Test Anxiety

- Tell yourself, "I can be anxious later, now is the time to take the exam."
- Counter negative thoughts with other, more valid thoughts like, "I don't have to be perfect."
- Tense and relax the muscles throughout your body.
- Take a couple of slow, deep breaths and try to maintain a positive attitude.
- If allowed, get a drink or go to the bathroom.
- Ask the instructor a question (but don't ask for answers).
- If allowed, eat something. A handful of nuts and raisins will give you an energy boost.
- Do something different. Break your pencil lead, then sharpen it. This allows you to do something physical – and can distract your mind momentarily until you get back on track.
- Know that there is no such thing as failure-- the only failure is not trying at all, so strive to do your personal best!
- Come to the understanding that you will not know every question on the test, but feel confident and give yourself praise for trying, even if you don't get the score you want.
- Tense and relax the muscles in several parts of your body, then take several deep breaths with your eyes closed.
- Try calming yourself by saying a couple of sentences like: "This test will not permanently affect my life. I'm going to feel calm and relaxed."

Lifestyle Tips for Students

Practice the neutral tool: It's important to catch negative mind loops that reinforce self-doubt or uncomfortable feelings. Every time you catch a negative thought repeating itself, stop the loop and practice going to neutral. Do this in the days leading up to the test, right before, and during the test.

Address the what-if questions: A lot of times before we have to do something like take a test, much of the anxiety we feel is a build-up from negative “what-if” thoughts. What if I fail, what if I can’t remember anything, or what if I run out of time? Try writing a what-if question that is positive and can help you take the big deal out of the situation and begin to see things in a different way. Examples of these kinds of questions are, “What if I can remember more than I think I can?” “What if I feel calmer than I think I can?”

Think good thoughts: When you feel nervous or anxious, try this. You can do it as many times as you need to or want. Remember something that makes you feel good. Maybe it is your pet or how you felt after a fun day with your friends. After you remember how you felt, hold that feeling. Let yourself feel that feeling for 10-20 seconds or more. It’s important to let yourself really feel that good feeling all over again. Practice this tool right before the big test.

Get enough sleep: Big tests require a lot of energy and stamina to be able to focus for several hours. Make sure you get at least eight hours of sleep the night before the test.

Have fun: Do something fun the night before to take your mind off the test. That way, your mind and emotions are more relaxed in the time leading up to the test.

Eat a hearty breakfast: The brain needs a lot of energy to maintain focus on a big test for several hours. Eat a hearty and healthy breakfast, including complex carbohydrates and protein to make your energy last as long as possible. Foods such as eggs, cereal, and whole-wheat toast help energize your brain to think more clearly and longer, compared with the fast-disappearing bolt of energy from drinking a soda or eating a cookie for breakfast. For a snack, bring simple foods such as peanut butter and crackers or cheese and crackers to sustain energy until lunch.

Dealing with Test Anxiety - The Dos and Don'ts

DON'T

...arrive too early or late to the exam.

...discuss the exam with others while you’re waiting for the exam. The anxiety of others can “rub off” and suddenly you begin to doubt yourself.

...forget to breathe properly during the test! Take deep breaths to help relax.

...get bogged down and worry about questions you don’t know; move on to the next question. The answer may come to you or you may get clues from other exam questions.

...rush through the test, but work at a comfortable pace, and don’t worry about how far along classmates are on the test.

...dwell on your mistakes.

...cram for an exam. The amount you learn won't be worth the stress.

...think of yourself or the test in a negative sense.

...stay up late studying the night before. You need the sleep. Begin studying a week in advance if possible.

...spend time with classmates who generate stress for you on test day.

...take those last few moments before the test for last minute cramming. Try to relax and spend that time reading the newspaper or some other distraction.

DO

...use statements such as “this is only one test,” “I am familiar with this material,” “I have the ability to do this,” “this test does not reflect on my intelligence,” etc.

...change body position now and then.

...go to the bathroom 15 minutes before the exam starts so that your bladder is empty for the long stretch you will spend sitting and writing.

...eat a small handful of nuts and raisins (if allowed) - this will give you a boost of energy.

...work on the easiest portions of the test first.

...remind yourself that the test is only a test.

...focus on integrating details into main ideas.

...something relaxing the last hour before the test.

...reward yourself when you are finished with the exam.

...tell yourself that you will do your best on the test, and that will be enough!

How to Set Up a Plan for Test Day

Eat a balanced breakfast – this will give you energy and mental stamina.

Listen carefully to the final instructions of the teacher. (How much time do you have to complete the test? Do all the questions count equally? Are there any corrections, changes, or additions to the test?) Also, try and sit in a location that you feel will be least distracting.

Things to Do BEFORE the Exam:

- Try to **avoid talking with other students** right before the exam. Their anxieties may rub off on you.
- Choose a **seat in a place with few distractions** (probably near the front).
- **Put things in perspective.** Remind yourself that your entire future doesn't depend on this exam. There will be other exams and other courses.

Many students fail a test or two but go on to have successful careers.

- **Remind yourself of past successes.** Think of a tough course or task in which you struggled but eventually succeeded. Tell yourself that if you did well in the past, you can do well on the upcoming exam.
- **Don't give a test the power to define you.** An exam won't tell you whether you're brilliant or stupid. Your performance on an exam mostly depends on how well you studied for the test, the quality of your prior education, and the test-taking strategies you use.
- **Visualize completing the test successfully** despite your anxiety. Play the entire "event" in your mind – picture yourself walking in calmly, working at a steady pace, not getting flustered, finishing and handing your test in with ease!
- **Expect a few "curve balls" on the exam.** Remind yourself that you're not expecting to get 100% on the exam; when you encounter a curve ball on the exam, you're not going to get upset and lose your concentration. Instead, you will simply **skip that question for now and return to it later** to make an attempt.

Tips to Use When you Are TAKING the Test :

- Do an **info dump**. As soon as you get your test, quickly **jot down any main formulas or key phrases** in the margin that you have learned that you feel you might forget as the test progresses.
- **Preview the test** before you answer anything. This gets you thinking about the material. Also, if you recognize a question as relevant to a certain formula or section of info learned, make a note in the margin.
- Quickly **calculate how much time you should allow for each section**. Make sure to note the point value of each question. This will give you some ideas on budgeting your time. (You don't want to spend 30 minutes on an essay question that counts only 5 points!)

The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is **not the only treatment option**. Conventional Western medicine (often called allopathic or orthodox medicine) is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools, and many pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available and freely used-- even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that **both have a role to play in the treatment program**.

Natural medicine has often been frowned upon by conventional doctors, especially by those who do not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby **providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options** from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, **natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed** by conventional doctors and represent a significant part

of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the **body has an innate capacity to heal itself**. While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a **unique and independent form of medicine** in their own right, well able to **treat a variety of conditions**. Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine. This encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a **holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease**. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to **support health** (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer. In many cases, **holistic medicine can accomplish just as much**, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, **natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing**.

In many cases, they can **succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed**. Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a **long history of usage** and there is a **wealth of empirical evidence** to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to **support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines**.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines **must be manufactured in the correct way**, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately, **not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards**, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called 'standardized' extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While **'standardized' extracts** may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have **grave disadvantages**, including an increase in side effects, as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In

some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which **retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb** as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, **always choose wisely**. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life-threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor, in order that your condition may be monitored. **Well-informed and supportive practitioners will support patients** who want to take responsibility for their own health.

Related Natural Remedies:

A + TestCalmer: For calming exam-related anxiety in students of all ages.

A+ TestCalmer is a combination remedy incorporating all-natural ingredients in a convenient liquid tincture form. It is a **100% safe, non-addictive, effective natural remedy** formulated by a clinical psychologist for both teenagers and adults.

A+ TestCalmer **promotes calmness and confidence immediately** before and during tests and exams without sacrificing mental alertness. Not only can 'nerves' negatively affect your academic performance, they can cause related physical complaints like headaches, stomachaches, and nausea.

Although it has excellent calming properties, A+ TestCalmer will **not cause drowsiness or adversely affect concentration** in any way.

A+ TestCalmer has been used for many years to safely maintain **health and systemic balance** in the brain and nervous system, without side effects and without the use of strong stimulants or sedatives.

A+ TestCalmer contains Gotu cola, known for its supportive function in maintaining brain, nervous system, circulatory health, and well-being.

Taken in combination with a healthy lifestyle and diet, A+ TestCalmer helps **lessen the apprehension and anxiety** experienced before a test or exam, while helping students maintain healthy concentration, clear focus, and optimum performance.

A+ TestCalmer is of **special benefit to students who are natural worriers**. For parents seeking natural tips to overcome test anxiety in students, A+ TestCalmer can make a significant difference, without compromising health or mental clarity.

[Learn more about A + TestCalmer](#)

PureCalm: Aids nervous system in stress resistance for balanced moods and feelings of well being.

PureCalm is a 100% safe, non-addictive herbal remedy that has been specially formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for adults and children.

PureCalm can be used to safely **maintain harmony, health and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, without harmful side effects and without sedatives. This remedy contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive function in maintaining brain.

PureCalm can especially benefit those individuals needing **support overcoming worry, managing stress and to promote inner calm** related to certain situations. Natural stress relief products such as PureCalm can be used consistently, without side effects or compromising health.

[Learn more about PureCalm](#)

BrainTonic: Aids in cognitive processes including concentration, memory and attentiveness.

Triple Complex Brain Tonic is a combination of three cellular-supporting biochemic tissue salts selected for their effect on brain and nervous system health.

This combination of tissue salts can be used regularly to promote **systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, as well as in conjunction with other remedies to maintain therapeutic effectiveness.

Tissue salts, also called cell salts or biochemic salts, are composed of **minerals that occur naturally at a cellular level** in our bodies and all organic matter on earth (plants, rocks, and soil).

There have been twelve essential tissue salts identified as important components of all body cells. Without these components, true health is not possible. Each tissue salt plays a different yet vital role in **maintaining cellular health in the organs and systems** of the body.

Ensuring the healthy functioning of all brain and nervous system cells **enhances the bioavailability of supplements, remedies, and even nutrients** in your diet.

Brain Tonic **maximizes all health efforts of the brain**, in addition to herbs and vitamins that promote mental focus in diet alone. And, because our tissue salts are naturally occurring in the body and manufactured to ensure safe, yet optimum potency, they are safe to use for all ages as well as during pregnancy.

[Learn more about Brain Tonic](#)

Read the testimonials for these quality products [here!](#)

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