

Multiple Choice Test Taking Tips

Before the Test

- Engage in Spaced Review – review material before class, attend lecture, review after class, and perform a weekly study session to synthesize information.
- Start studying *at least* one week prior but earlier would be advantageous.
- Take frequent breaks. It is better to study for many short periods of time than in one large block of time.
- Study when you are most able to concentrate; try to avoid studying late at night if you are a morning person or if studying tends to make you sleepy.
- Prepare a study guide or checklist if the instructor has not provided one.
- Start by studying the most important information and the general concepts, then go back and study the details after you have learned the main ideas.
- Create a study group but meet only once everyone has reviewed/studied the material and only with other people that are serious about studying. Set a topic and schedule to follow when you meet so that you don't get off track.
- Study by asking yourself or study group members questions about the material. Make up scenarios and answer questions about the patient/diagnosis/treatment. Aim for application and synthesis of the material, not just memorization.
- Get a good night's sleep before the exam and make sure you eat well (not too much sugar or caffeine).

During the Test

- Ignore/avoid other test takers. Sit in the same area you do for lecture, if possible.
- Preview the test:
How many questions are there? How much time do you have?
- Always read the full question carefully, don't assume you know what the question will ask. Look for keywords.
- Answer the easy questions first then go back and answer the more difficult questions.
- Cover the options, read the question, and try to answer before looking at options. It can also help to think of everything you know about that topic/disease/intervention before you look at the options.
- If you do not know the answer right away, eliminate the options you know are incorrect.
- Leave time to go back and review the questions and answers. It is possible that you misread a question the first time; however, change your answer only if you're absolutely sure your second choice is correct.
- Remember, you are looking for the *best* answer, not only a correct one, and not one that must be true all of the time, in all cases, and without exceptions.

After the Test

- Attend any test reviews that the instructor provides.
- Go back to your notes/textbook to clarify any areas that you had difficulty with on the test.
- Make an appointment with your instructor to talk about any content based questions that you have.

- Make an appointment with your academic learning specialist if you need to develop your test preparation or taking skills.