

Decreasing Test-taking Anxiety in Nursing Students:

Recommendations for Nursing Faculty



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Objectives

- To discuss test taking anxiety and its implications for students
- To identify successful strategies, physical, psychological, and sensory, which can be used by nursing faculty to reduce test-taking anxiety in nursing students
- To discuss existing literature and evidence
- To discuss feasibility of methods and recommendations for nursing faculty

Background

- Test anxiety
- Schools of nursing: high stakes environment
- Fear and worry about testing has adverse effects on students ability to concentrate and recall material.
- Johnson (2014) identified test anxiety as one of the major barriers to student success in nursing education programs.

Literature Review

- Design and Review Methods:
 - A systematic review in line with PRISMA guidelines
- Data Sources:
 - Literature search
 - Databases used were CINAHL, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, PubMed (Medline), and Ovid Nursing Journals
 - Key words used included “test anxiety and nursing students”, “test anxiety and students”, “decreasing test anxiety and nursing students”, and “reducing test anxiety and university students”
 - The applied limits were sources published between 2000 and 2016.

Physical

- Auriculotherapy
- Muscle relaxation
- Deep breathing



Psychological or Cognitive Therapy

- Rational emotive behavior therapy
- Guided reflection
- Mental rehearsal strategies
- Counseling
- Biofeedback-assisted relaxation
- Co-meditation
- Emotional freedom therapy



Sensory

- Aromatherapy
- Music therapy



Results

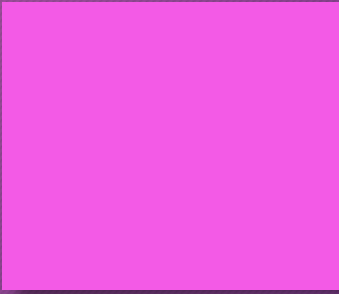
- Gap which highlights opportunities for future research
- Large body of evidence about test taking anxiety
- Extremely limited evidence surrounding test taking anxiety among nursing students
- Many strategies to reduce test anxiety reviewed proved to be beneficial
- Some showed no statistical significance
- Recommendations



Conclusion

- Most feasible for nursing faculty to implement
- Incorporating these techniques in faculty development curriculum
- Techniques were effective in relieving stress, lowering blood pressures and pulses, and substantially increasing academic performance which all correlate with decreased test anxiety.





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