

# Stress - Less

## Study Kit



Your guide to surviving exams  
with less stress!

[STUDY NOW](#)



# Stress-Less

and find out  
what's inside!

The Basics **abc**

Sleep

zzZ

Eat Well



Planning



The Pomodoro  
Technique



Delayed  
Gratification



Worry  
Awareness



Relaxation



Exam Day

# Stress - Less

and get the basics right!

*You've probably heard it all before, but getting the basics right makes for less stress when it comes to studying.*



## Find a quiet space

Trying to study at the dining table or with siblings running around can be challenging. Find yourself a designated room, or quiet corner to set yourself up.

*If you can't find a quiet space, consider using headphones.*



## with no distractions

When studying your phone and constant notifications can be distracting. Try putting your phone away and/or turning off your notifications.

*Let others know you are studying to avoid interruptions.*

**Click here**  
to check out a  
gamified app to  
help.

*You'll be spending many hours here, so set your space up well.*

A desk and comfy chair are important for setting up your study space. Ensure you have good lighting (near a window or a desk lamp), and enough space.

## to set up your study space



*Don't waste valuable study time looking for items you'll need.*

Before you sit down to study make sure you have everything you need. From text books to study cards, calculators to highlights, pens and pencils.

## with everything you need.



# Stress - Less

and sleep to  
remember.

Z

Z

Z

*The aim of studying is to learn, retain and recall information, and you guessed it...sleep plays a vital role in this.*

## Why is sleep important?

Sleep helps with memory retention by enhancing memory consolidation.

Sleep improves your ability to learn, memorise, retain, recall and use your new knowledge to solve problems.

Research shows there is a positive link between sleep quality and consistency, and test scores.

Therefore, the more regular and consistent your sleep, the higher your test scores are likely to be.

How many times  
have you stayed  
awake all night  
studying for an  
upcoming exam?

Consider  
this

## Consistency is key!

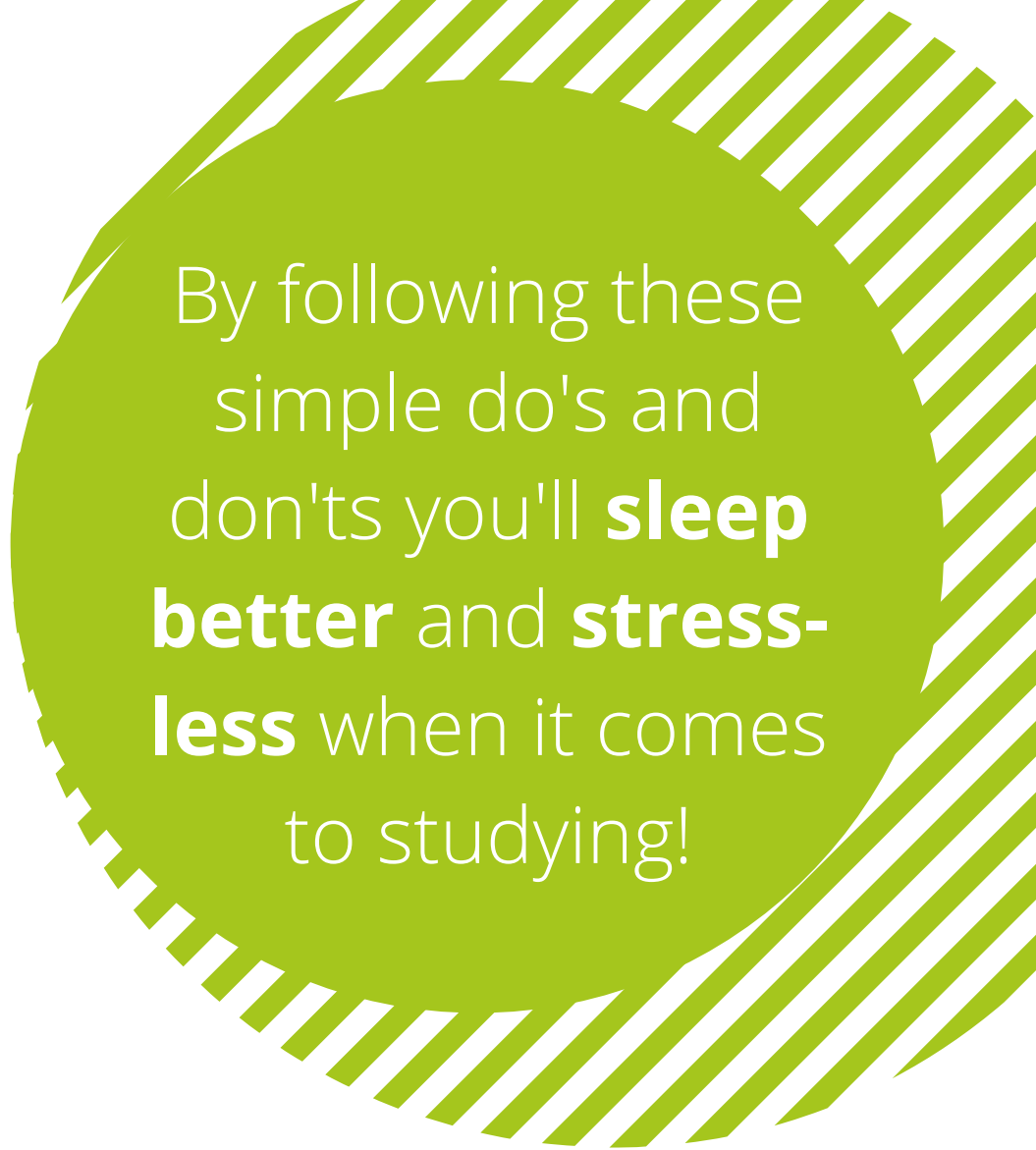
To be able to see the full impact of sleep on your learning, consistency is needed during **the entire learning process** - during your entire school term of learning, not just the night before an exam. And here's why...

Getting a good night's sleep **before** learning is important for your **ability to learn** and **make new memories**.

Getting a good night's sleep **after** learning is essential for **recalling** what you've learnt, **transferring** what you learnt from your **short-term to your long-term memory**, and for **drawing connections** and **meaning** from what you've learnt.

**Sleep = Memories = Less-stress**



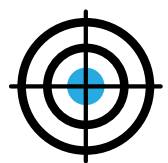


## The do's



Go to sleep at a **reasonable hour** - between 10pm and 12am

Stick to a **consistent** sleep schedule and routine



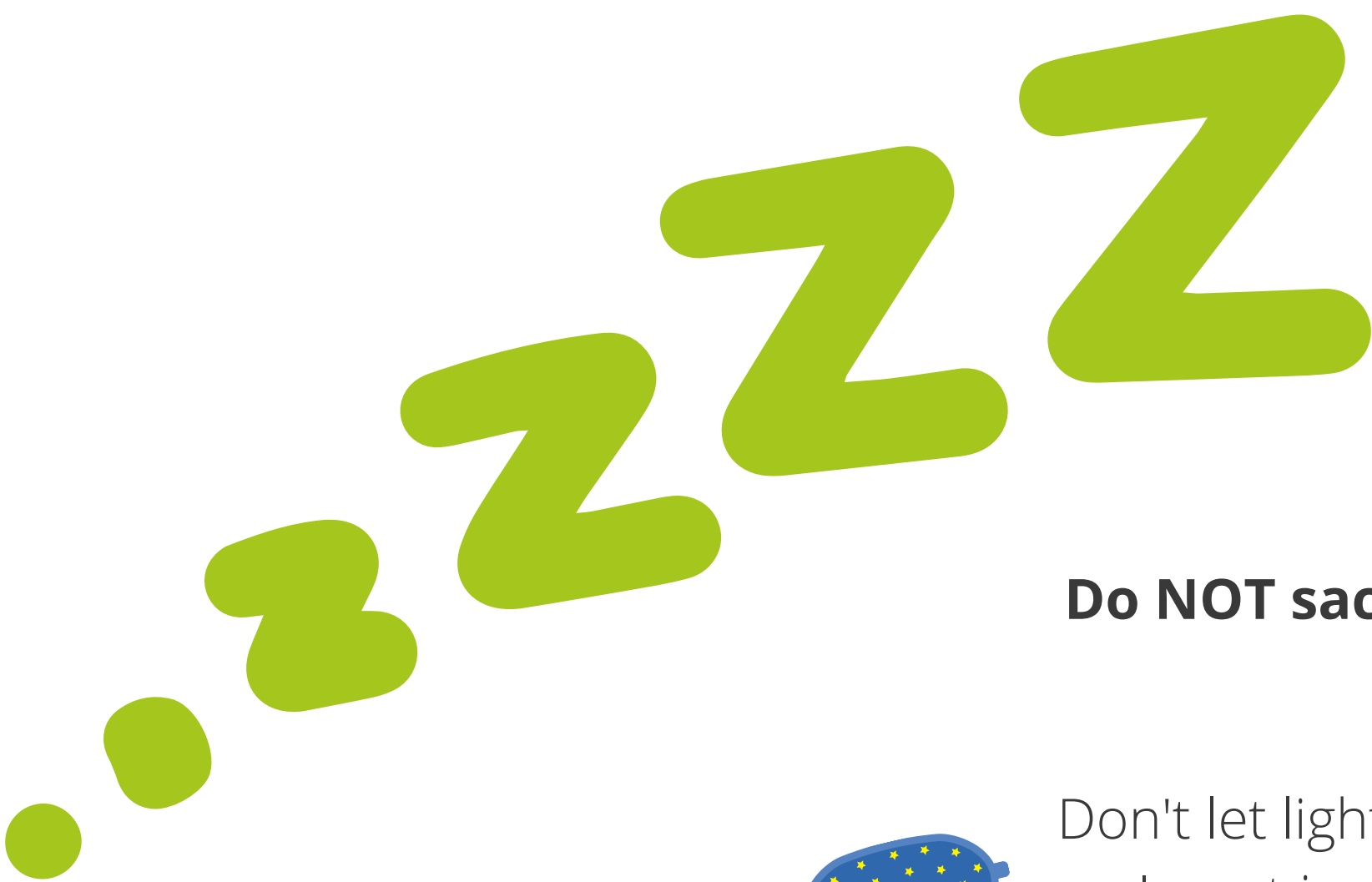
Aim to sleep for between **7** and **9** hours each night

Invest in a pair of **anti blue light glasses** for the nights when you're studying or doing homework on your computer after 8pm



Invest in a sleep tracker.

Sleep trackers not only help you to keep check on the **quality of your sleep**, but they also help you prioritise the sleep you need.



## and the don'ts

**Do NOT sacrifice sleep** in order to study



Don't let light and noise stop you from falling asleep. Invest in a **sleep mask** or **earplugs** to block out light and noise.

Limit your caffeine intake (including energy drinks) **after 3pm**. Any caffeine after 3pm can disrupt your sleep.





# Stress - Less

## and eat well.

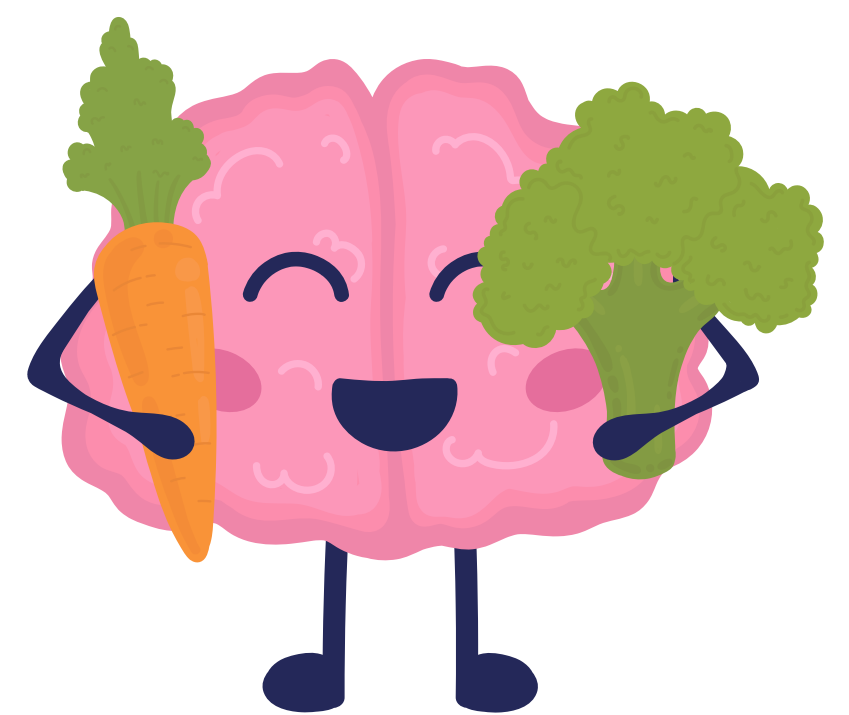
*The food you eat literally fuels your brain, which makes eating well essential for studying well.*

### Why is eating well important?

Eating well plays an important role in your overall health and to help you get the most out of each day.

Fueling your brain with the right foods allow you to perform at your best.

Eating healthy and nutritious food has benefits for your mood and brain skills, such as memory and concentration, that can help boost your study preparation and results.



Focus on fueling your body with **more of the good stuff** (fruit and vegetables) and **less of the bad stuff** (junk foods and sugary drinks) to ensure you have a head start when it comes to studying.

### Planning is key!

**Planning** ahead can help keep you **on track** and **focused** on eating well. Try using the **meal planner** on the next page.

If you don't prepare all the meals you eat, involve your parents or others to come up with a plan. Alternatively just fill out the sections you can.

TIP: When planning meals, don't forget to include the left-overs. This makes for easy meal preparation.

What's filling, but doesn't make you feel sluggish?

What's easy to eat so you can focus on your work?

What doesn't make a mess?

### healthy study snacks

Stuck for ideas? Try these:



Almonds

Dried fruit

Air-popped popcorn

Smoothie

Fruit Salad



Don't forget



Staying **hydrated** also helps you **think clearly** and **concentrate**. It's important to drink plenty of water, and to avoid excessive use of sugary drinks, alcohol and caffeine.



# MEAL PLAN

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Shopping List

Notes



# Stress-Less

**and make  
a plan!**

*When it comes to studying, planning ahead is the key to achieving your potential.*

## Why is it useful for studying?

You can experience anxiety when you have difficulty tolerating the uncertainty of a situation (eg. the uncertainty of your performance on an upcoming exam). Although you have no direct control over the exam questions, you have control over what you do in the lead up to the exam to ensure you perform at your best.

From the moment you have the exam date, you can **begin to plan...**



### Book It In

Write down your exam date/s in a study planner.

### Break It Down

Work out what you need to be studying. Make a list of all the sub-topics that will be in the exam.

Evaluate your knowledge on each sub-topic.

Plan to focus your study time on the topics you know the least.



### Work Backwards

Work backwards in your planner to identify how many days you have to study. Assign days to study each sub-topic.



### Stick To It

You're more likely to study if you make appointments with yourself and pick a specific sub-topic to study.

Write down your study dates in your planner.





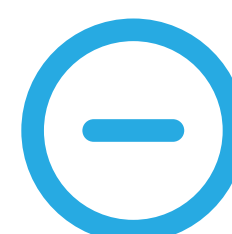


By following these simple tips you'll **plan better** and **stress-less** when it comes to studying!



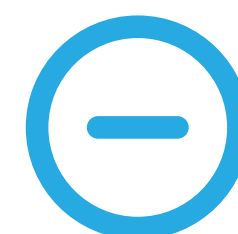
Some subjects need more revision time than others.

Don't leave your least favourite subject to last.



Build in some time for when things don't go to plan. For example, you may be unwell or a subject may take longer to revise than expected.

Don't forget to include any appointments, study groups or other commitments you have in your planner.



*Find the perfect study planner*



It's visual



Tick things off as you go

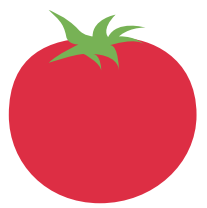


Don't miss anything

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MORNING	MORNING	MORNING	MORNING	MORNING	MORNING	MORNING
SWIMMING 07:00-08:00	STUDY 9:00-11:30 Ch.7 page 153-165	LECTURE 09:30-11:00	STUDY 8:30-10:00 Ch.8 page 236-245	FREE 08:00-10:00	FREE	FREE
STUDY 09:00-11:30 Ch.7 page 110-153				STUDY 10:00-12:00 Ch.8 page 245-270		
AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON	AFTERNOON
STUDY GROUP 15:00-17:00	STUDY 13:00-17:00 Ch.7 page 165-200	STUDY 12:00-14:30 Ch.7 page 200-217	EXAM 12:00-13:30	LECTURE 12:00-14:00	FREE	MATINEE 15:00 - 17:00
LECTURE 14:30-16:00		STUDY GROUP 15:00-17:00	FITNESS 14:00-15:30	STUDY 15:30-17:00 Ch.8 page 270-282		
EVENING	EVENING	EVENING	EVENING	EVENING	EVENING	EVENING
FREE 19:00-22:00	CLIMBING 19:00-20:00	STUDY 18:30-19:30 Ch.7 page 217-236	PARTY 21:00-03:00		DINNER 18:00-20:00	FREE

# Stress-Less

## and the Pomodoro Technique.



*A pomodoro is an Italian tomato, but what does it have to do with studying you ask...*



### What is it?

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management technique where you alternate pomodoros - focused work sessions - with frequent short breaks.

### Why use it?

You will stay more focused and mentally fresh, than studying for long periods. It will help you get things done, and resist interruptions and distractions.

### How it works?

1



Pick a specific task (that's achievable).

2



Set a 25 minute timer (a pomodoro).

3



Work on your task until the time is up.

4



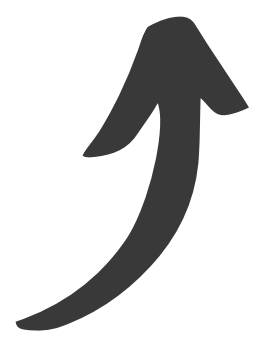
Take a 5 minute break.

5



Every 4 pomodoros take a longer 15-30 minute break.

*Do something you enjoy!*



### How to get the most out of it?

#### **Break down complex projects**

If it takes more than 4 pomodoros, it needs to be divided into smaller, actionable steps.

#### **Smaller tasks go together.**

A task that takes less than 1 pomodoro, should be combined with other simple tasks.

#### **Once set it must ring.**

The pomodoro is a period of time and cannot be broken, especially not to check chats or texts.



# Stress-Less

and be  
rewarded!

*It's motivating to achieve your goals and be rewarded...so why not try applying this to your study.*

## Delayed gratification

The ability to wait to get what you want (the reward!)



### How is this useful for studying?

Your ability to delay gratification can mean the difference between achieving your goals or not.

It can be easy to put off or avoid studying to do what you want now, like spending time with friends, gaming, or watching YouTube or a movie.

### How to resist now and be rewarded later?

By using the power of reward!

Let's look at how you can increase your ability to delay gratification:

- **Give yourself a timeframe.** Set yourself a time period where you will study and allocate a specific reward following this study period.
- **Set realistic goals.** If what you plan to achieve in a set timeframe is unrealistic, then you're more likely to give up and have the reward before you've achieved what you set out to do.
- **Choose your reward.** Decide your reward before you start studying. Make your reward big enough to keep you moving towards your study goal.

How many times  
have you told  
yourself that you're  
just not motivated  
to study?



*Give yourself a  
motivation boost!*



Applying delayed gratification and using the power of reward can give you the much needed motivation boost to  
**achieve your study goals.**

# Stress-Less

and be  
worry aware!

*We know studying and exams can be stressful, but by being worry aware you can stress-less.*

Worry is quite common with young people who experience anxiety. Some young people may experience increased worry in the lead up to tests or exams.

This can be normal as it tells you that it is important to you, but **too much worry** can impact your ability to perform and do your best.

Intrusive worries are unhelpful thoughts that 'snowball' and increase your anxiety.



## How does worry affect studying?

- **Anxiety impacts your working memory.** This is your ability to hold information in your mind for short periods in order to do something. If you can't remember something, how are you going to be able to respond to it?
- **Anxiety impacts your ability to process your thoughts.** If you're distracted by your worries, how can you concentrate on the task you're completing - like studying or sitting an exam?
- **Anxiety can lead to avoidance.** You may want to avoid studying or going to school if you're feeling anxious. This can lead to falling behind in class work or procrastinating and leaving study to the last minute, which can make your anxiety about school and study even worse.

*you need to recognise it, to change it!*



These three basic steps can help you  
**increase your worry awareness:**

## Step # 1 : Identify the triggers

See if you can find out what situations are triggering your anxiety  
(eg. sitting down to study)

Keep a diary of your worries.

A worry diary helps you to identify:

1. What you were doing when you're feeling anxious
2. What you were thinking in that moment
3. How bad the anxiety was (on a scale of 0 to 10)

**Click here**

to check out the  
Youtherapy  
Printables  
Worry Tracker.



## Step # 2 : Learn to recognise the unhelpful thoughts

We're all likely to have unhelpful thoughts from time-to-time. These may be where you over-estimate the likelihood of things going wrong or you may have unrealistic high expectations of yourself to get a certain grade or result.

These thoughts can have a **powerful impact** on your emotions and stress levels. When you catch yourself slipping into an **unhelpful thought pattern**, you can then do something about it. But without that awareness you remain in that cycle of worry.

## Step # 3 : Replace the unhelpful thoughts with more useful thoughts

Replacing the unhelpful thoughts can reduce the cycle of worry.

For example:

**Unhelpful Thought** - "I'm going to fail this exam"

**Replacement Thought** - "I know I can do this as I have studied and completed my revision preparation and passed my practice exam"



# Stress-Less

## using relaxation!

*When you're worrying too much and feeling stressed, using relaxation is a great way to stress-less.*



When you feel stressed, your body responds by releasing hormones that increase your blood pressure and raise your heart rate. This is called the stress response.

Too much stress can be bad for your body and mind. Using relaxation techniques can help you feel calm and combat stress in the lead up to exams.

## Deep breathing

A simple way to relax is by **practicing deep breathing**. You can do deep breathing almost anywhere:

1. Sit still or lie down and place one hand on your stomach. Put your other hand over your heart.
2. Inhale slowly until you feel your stomach rise.
3. Hold your breath for a moment.
4. Exhale slowly, feeling your stomach fall.
5. And repeat!



## Shifting focus

Studying is demanding on your mind. When you take breaks ensure you do an activity that shifts your focus of attention for **at least 20 minutes**.

You can do this with the deep breathing activity above by **focusing your attention** on your breath. Your breathing occurs in the moment, the here-and-now.

Focusing on your breath will shift your focus and attention away from any worries to give your mind that much needed break.

## Calming Blankets

Relaxation is important, especially before bed, to slow the brain activity down. Try a weighted Calming Blanket.

A Calming Blanket is a therapeutic blanket that includes weighted material designed to provide deep touch stimulation to the body.

Deep pressure stimulation affects the nervous system by decreasing cortisol levels (our stress hormone) which **creates a calming effect** and may reduce stress and increase feelings of well-being.





# Stress - Less

it's  
exam day!

*This is what you've been studying hard for, the end is in sight, but how do you bring it home strong?*

The big day has arrived. You wake up on the morning of your exam and you've already done all you can to study and prepare.

But, how do we get our **mind** and **body** ready for the day ahead?



*Exam day tips* for you to **do your best** on the day:

## Prepare the night before

- Collect your materials the night before so that you know where they are and you know that they're ready.
- Get enough sleep. Plan to finish any study well before bedtime. Your mind might be thinking about the upcoming exam, so give yourself the chance to relax your mind and put away your phone. Aim to get at least 8 hours sleep.
- Remember to set your alarm. Give yourself extra time to get ready. You don't need extra stress in the morning by running late.

## Prepare your mind and body

- Be mindful of any unwanted and unhelpful thoughts on the day. Avoid the negative talk and remind yourself of all the preparation you've done.
- Calm yourself with focused breathing. Taking some deep breaths and shifting your focus onto your breath can help reduce any anxiety.
- Fuel your mind with a healthy breakfast. Hunger is just another distraction that you don't need in the exam, so make sure your breakfast is healthy and filling.



## Prepare for the environment

- When getting dressed for the exam, think about the exam room. Dress in layers so that you can remove or put on layers if you become too hot or cold during the exam.
- If you can, wear clothes that you feel comfortable in. Remember you'll be sitting down for a long time. Maybe leave those jeans that are a little too tight at home.