

# OCEAA Healthy Kids

## How to Eat Right Before a Test

Whether you're studying, doing homework, getting ready for an exam or just need that extra pick-me-up in class—eating the right foods can help boost your brain. By consuming healthy carbohydrates, you are not only feeding your tummy, but also your brain. Interestingly, our brain is the only organ in our bodies that uses glucose for energy. Carbohydrates provide our brain with glucose that helps keep us sharp and alert. Here I will offer some tips for eating right before a test.

### Healthy Tip # 1

Avoid candy and chips; they only provide a quick burst of energy, and in the long run don't help our brains. Our brains need a steady flow of carbohydrates to sustain the mental energy that is required during long hours of studying before an exam. Junk food with high sugar content or loaded with carbohydrates will give the brain and body a temporary "quick rush" and will not allow the body or brain to stay mentally alert.

### Healthy Tip # 2

Consume healthy carbohydrates which are found in whole grains, fruits and veggies. These foods produce a longer energy supply. In addition they help boost serotonin that calms the brain. If you are stressed about an exam, eat healthy carbohydrates an hour or two before. This will help with memory as well.

### Healthy Tip # 3

Try drinking something warm and soothing such as milk or chamomile tea an hour before bedtime if you are stressed about an exam. This can help calm your nerves and provide you with the good night's sleep you'll need for the next day.

### Healthy Tip # 4

Eat comfort foods such as apples and peanut butter if you are very nervous and have anxiety attacks before a test. The fruit will provide a serotonin boost that can calm your nerves making it easier to focus, while the peanut butter is filled with healthy fats and proteins.

### Healthy Tip # 5

Eat a treat that will help calm your nerves, such as grapes. Like apples they can stimulate serotonin; however, the high-fiber content helps slow down sugar absorption and the fiber helps soothe the stress.