



*The*

# HORIZON

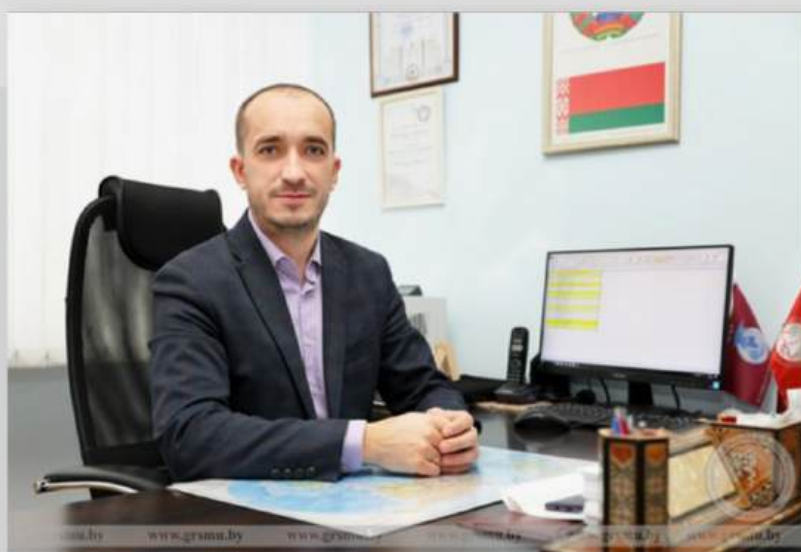
VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2, FEBRUARY 2025

- ENDLESS SCROLL: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL MEDIA SCROLLING
- HOW STUDENTS FACE CHALLENGES WHILE CONCENTRATING IN STUDY
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# DEAN'S DESK



Dear students, we at Grodno State Medical University strive to provide students with top-quality education, but that's not it. GRSMU is also a hub for Scientific, Cultural, and Sports related activities. We wholeheartedly acknowledge that International students are an integral part of our university, and we take immense pride in that. Grodno State Medical University is glad to work with students from different countries and provide them with a stage to represent their nation and culture.



DEAN OF FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
DR. ALEKSANDER ALEKSANDEROVICH STENKO

GRSMU celebrates its uniqueness in diversity, for in its true essence our university is a junction where students from various backgrounds and cultures come together as one big family. GRSMU has always encouraged students to explore further and beyond in every field they try their hands at. I hope that you like the novel concept of 'The Horizon' - a magazine that serves as a platform for the students to voice their opinions, share their takes and present their points of view.

'**The Horizon**' is a medium of extended communication where we can learn a lot from one another. I highly appreciate this initiative and personally support it. I look forward to reading the interesting blogs written by you.

# WELCOME TO THE HORIZON



“We all have fascinating stories to share!” For the longest time, I have had this idea of starting a magazine. But not just any conventional magazine, one that shall serve as a platform for the students and alumni of International faculty at Grodno State Medical University to share their stories. A platform that enables students to share their takes on various curricular and extracurricular aspects of medicine. Thus, the idea of ‘**The Horizon**’, came to life.



**DR. MEHUL H. SADADIWALA, FOUNDER,  
CLASS OF 2023**

‘**The Horizon**’ will be a creative intersection where students can freely give commentaries about Lifestyle, Culture, Productivity tips, and more. Throughout the years, many individuals at GrSMU have inculcated valuable skills and gained experience with a fair share of success in various disciplines. Maybe you run a successful YouTube channel or an educational website, or maybe you are a successful student-researcher or an educator, and so much more. ‘The Horizon’ enables students to share their personal experiences. The insights that you share will encourage other students to take further strides and explore future possibilities.

‘**The Horizon**’ is supported directly by the Dean of the International Faculty, and it will operate under the supervision of the International Students’ Scientific Committee. Students from 1st to 6th year, and even graduates, can submit their blogs to this magazine. The articles should directly or indirectly revolve around student life to share knowledge and the collective growth of students.

For inquiries and submissions.

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# EDITOR'S DESK



“ My name is Divya Dilshara, and I am currently a fourth-year student at Grodno State Medical University. I am excited to be part of the editor desk for 2025, where I can explore my passion for engaging content creation. I focus on lifestyle topics, striving to create articles that resonate with a wide range of readers.

With a strong eye for emerging trends and a commitment to quality, I work collaboratively with writers and creatives to produce informative and visually captivating pieces. My editorial style emphasizes creativity and clarity, ensuring that each story is not only interesting but also meaningful. I am thrilled to contribute to the vibrant community at the ISSS and look forward to bringing fresh ideas to life. ”



**DIVYA DILSHARA,**  
EDITOR, JAN- MAR 2025



**OSO JESUTOFUNMI EUNICE,**  
EDITOR, JAN-MAR 2025

“ For a successful magazine, there are series of work that is done behind the scenes, from the writers all the way to the editors. I am honored to be a part of the Horizon family in 2025. I aim to foster collaboration among students, encouraging them to share their perspectives and opinions on topics that matter which I believe will enrich the content of this magazine. I really appreciate this role, as it will also help in honing my editorial skills. ”

And a message to our dearest readers, we would like to invite you all, students and alumni, to share with us the blogs that directly or indirectly revolve around student life, to share knowledge and experiences that has had an impact on your growth within and outside the bounds of our university.

Concluding, let us alter the limitations of our individual efforts and collectively explore limitless Horizons.

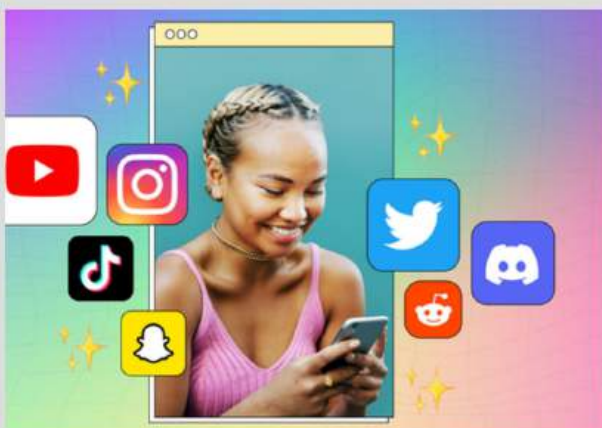
# ENDLESS SCROLL: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL MEDIA SCROLLING

By scrolling through social media, we can categorize content into short formats like reels and TikToks, or long formats like YouTube videos. This journal mainly discusses how quick hits affect students' daily activities.

WRITTEN BY  
BHADUKIYA  
PRINCE  
CLASS OF 2028

## INTRODUCTION

In 2024, two major platforms dominate short-form content: Instagram and TikTok. Instagram Reels captures 22% more attention than regular videos, with over 200 billion reels played daily across Instagram and Facebook. TikTok boasts over 1 billion daily users who spend an average of 95 minutes on the app, while Instagram users spend about 62 minutes daily. Notably, there are 50 million Gen Z users on these platforms. This data illustrates how short content is becoming increasingly popular among students, highlighting its addictive nature and potential to disrupt daily life. 71.8% of adults use a screen for most of their mornings upon waking up and once again, Gen Z had the highest percentage at 76.1%. Almost 8 in 10 Gen Z's use social media for most of their evenings before bed.



## THE DOPAMINE LOOP: UNPACKING THE NEUROSCIENCE OF REAL ADDICTION

After we receive notifications on our mobile devices, not interacting with them can cause the release of cortisol, a stress hormone.

This reaction can increase stress levels and make it harder to concentrate. Research shows that students can focus for about 65 seconds due to frequent dopamine releases, while office workers, around 3 minutes. A study by Carnegie Mellon University's Human-Computer Interaction Lab involved 136 students, some of whom had phones and others who did not. The results showed that those with phones were over 29% more distracted. Neuroscience research indicates that watching short reels or TikTok videos stimulates the brain's anterior medial thalamic nuclei, which activates the default mode network. The default mode network includes parts of the brain that are active when a person is awake but in laziness or comfort position and daydreaming situation. This means that while we engage with content, our brains also process unrelated thoughts. If you notice these platforms show firstly random content, but over time, they start presenting content we prefer, which further stimulates our brains. According to research in environmental and public health, excessive consumption of this content can lead to anxiety and short-term memory loss. Many people notice that after spending hours on these platforms, they can only remember 2 or 3 videos. On average, children spend about 75 minutes on TikTok and check the app more than 19 times a day.



## RECLAIMING MY TIME: BREAKING FREE FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

As we saw results, we can tell this addiction like Honey with poison it kills your mental stability your time and by watching reels or TikTok you got almost nothing from that.

- You have one way, that is just delete your social media accounts. But it seems impossible because if you are in this generation, you know you have to be updated in social relations. Work and social media is the best platform to get updated. But this blessing can become a curse sometimes and this will give pressure to do some things which we don't like. This phenomenon is called "Digital peer pressure".

- You can set time limits, like for students one to two hours per day.

- Also, you can turn off notifications from this app.

- Before you sleep do exercise or listen to songs and after you wake up, do your regular schedule like breakfast, news reading, bath.

- Often, people turn to this apps when they're feeling bored, lonely, or experiencing FOMO. However, during such times, it's beneficial to engage in other activities like reading books, taking a walk around the room, or finding ways to break the cycle. These alternatives can be very effective.



## CONCLUSION

In my opinion there are two results we get:

First, Scrolling can provide temporary enjoyment, motivation and we go into comfort zone. And also, there is a phenomenon called the "keeping up with the Joneses". It affects our minds and allows us to see others' luxurious lifestyles which can create unrealistic expectations, leading to dissatisfaction, anxiety, and sometimes even depression due to feelings of FOMO (fear of missing out).

An example of "Keeping Up with the Joneses" in Students: Consider a high school student named Sarah. As she scrolls through Instagram, she sees her friends posting about their luxurious vacations and new clothes. Feeling pressure to match their lifestyles, Sarah starts spending more money on trendy outfits and studying harder for perfect grades. This constant comparison makes her feel anxious, showing how social media can create unrealistic expectations and affect student's mental well-being. To overcome this addiction, it helps to engage with longer and more meaningful content or set time limits like for students 1 hours on consumption. The best approach is to focus on your passions or career.



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# HOW STUDENTS FACE CHALLENGES WHILE CONCENTRATING IN STUDY.

This article discusses the critical issue of student concentration, particularly among university students, and its impact on learning quality. It highlights that lower concentration levels hinder lecturers' motivation and effectiveness in teaching, preventing students from achieving their expected outcomes. The article aims to identify various interruptions faced by undergraduate students during lectures and examines the role of teachers in addressing these challenges. By analyzing these factors, the article proposes practical solutions to enhance teaching and learning quality in university settings, ultimately benefiting both educators and students.

WRITTEN BY  
 FATEHAN  
 ALWAAZKHAN  
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 CLASS OF 2028

## INTRODUCTION

Concentration is the ability to focus your mind and senses on one specific thing. According to Kumar, it's a skill that can be developed. Essentially, concentration allows us to stay engaged and process information effectively. As Kumar states, concentration is something that can be acquired; it refers to the mental state where all the senses and mind of the human are directed towards a specific thing. Attention can also be regarded as a process that encodes language input, keeps it active in working and short-term memory, and retrieves it from long-term memory"

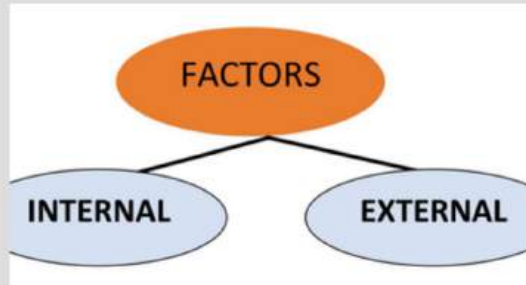


## IMPORTANCE OF CONCENTRATION

Teachers always demand strong concentration from the learners in a classroom setting. The importance of attention in the learning experience of students is largely paradoxical. According to Al'Omaili and Al Balushi, learning is a critical process of attention.

## FACTORS THAT AFFECT CONCENTRATION OF STUDENTS

There are many factors all having a positive or negative reflection on student concentration. The two most important things are internal and external factors influencing ones' attention to concentration. However, internal factors were those within the student or lecturer himself. For instance, boredom is such an internal factor, as it is a feeling brought from within oneself; it is self-created emotion. Internal factors usually can be manipulated and changed. Other factors are exogenous, i.e., outside of lectures or the possibility of students to manage, e.g., noise when a plane takes off.



## INTERNAL FACTORS

Students' interest and understanding ability broadly determine their concentration in class as said: "Interest is the determiner of good attention, and interest is always behind the actions of an attentive student".

Some of the main factor that affects are:

- Mental Health- Anxiety, depression, and stress can hinder focus and attention.
- Motivation- A student's intrinsic motivation to learn can enhance concentration, while lack of interest can diminish it.
- Nutrition- A balanced diet supports cognitive function, while poor nutrition can lead to decreased concentration.
- Sleep Quality - Adequate and quality sleep is crucial for maintaining focus and cognitive performance.
- Learning Style- Individual learning preferences (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) can impact how well students concentrate on tasks.
- Self-Regulation- The ability to manage one's time and behaviors affects concentration. Poor self-regulation may lead to distractions.
- Emotional State- Positive emotions can enhance concentration, while negative emotions may impede it.

### EXTERNAL FACTORS

While internal factors can be managed or changed, external factors are normally uncontrollable. They can be understood as objective factors around both instructors and students and greatly affect their performance during lesson time.

Some of the main factors are:

- Environment- Disturbance due to loud noise can affect the concentration of students not only noise but sometimes light also affects if there is low light it can affect eyes due to which our concentration affects.
- Technology- Due to smartphones, social media and other digital device affect our concentration.
- Parents- Due to parent's students sometimes get stress which affects their concentration. Parents compare their kids with other, they pressure them due to which sometimes students get distracted and always think I am not good and get demotivate and their concentration level decreases from the study.
- Health- When the students are ill they can't concentrate on the study. So students should physically fit so they can concentrate.

### SOLUTIONS

Once one acknowledges all the possible distractions from both inside and outside, it would be much easier to look for solutions that can minimize negative influences and maximize students' interest and understanding by using various necessary teaching strategies to take full advantage of students' lengthened attention span.



### INCREASING STUDENTS' INTEREST

There are many reasons behind the decreasing learning's motivation for students, but the most affecting reasons are students' lack of enthusiasm in the lesson. It is pivotal that instructors help them set up the correct learning aim, which means students have good consciousness of their learning.

### TEACHING STUDENTS APPROPRIATE LEVEL ACCORDING TO THEIR COMPETENCY

Students' level should always be the basis for any lesson plans made by instructors. The level of content of the lesson should not be higher or lower than students' competency since it will easily demotivate students and make them lose their excitement for the class.

### GIVING CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS

All the instructions in class should be presented in a way that all the students in the class can understand. Instructors should also try to be on the students' level by using appropriate language level, presenting speed, and gestures to aid students understanding.

### USING A VARIETY OF TEACHING METHODS AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Instructors should avoid repeating the same teaching strategies in class. So, in order to maintain students' focus on class, lessons should be conducted in "a variety of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic techniques",

### DEVELOP A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILY

Many instructors now have a good connection with students' family, which will help them easily inform students' learning process with the parents.



## CONCLUSION

Maintaining student's focus is both a challenge and a motivation for teachers to change themselves if needed for the better. Even though countless factors can affect students' ability to keep their focus well, there are also solutions. Solutions have given above maybe not the best to deal with all the distractions, especially the uncontrollable ones, yet they can be one of the ways for instructors to minimize as much as possible the negative effects and maximize students' attention span.

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# HOW JOURNALING CAN HELP MEDICAL STUDENTS MANAGE STRESS AND ACHIEVE PERSONAL GROWTH

Medical school is an intense journey, and for many students, it can feel like an overwhelming marathon. The pressure to excel academically, combined with personal challenges such as financial strain, distance from family, and adapting to new cultures, often leads to high levels of stress and burnout. This blog explains ways medical students can relieve stress

WRITTEN BY  
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## INTRODUCTION

As a medical student, you might feel like you're constantly juggling exams, study sessions, and personal responsibilities while trying to keep your mental health intact. So, how do you manage the emotional toll and stay on track with your personal growth? Enter journaling. This simple yet powerful practice can help medical students cope with stress, enhance personal development, and find mental clarity in the chaos of medical school life.



## WHY JOURNALING IS A GAME-CHANGER FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

It's simple to overlook your mental health when you're overwhelmed with deadlines and textbooks. Writing in a journal offers a methodical approach to managing your thoughts, processing emotions, and thinking back on your daily life. You can learn more about yourself and develop healthy coping mechanisms for stress by putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard). As a medical student, you likely face unique challenges exam pressures, long study hours, financial struggles, and social isolation.

These stressors can quickly become overwhelming, and sometimes it feels like there's no safe space to unload your thoughts. That's where journaling steps in. It serves as a private outlet for your emotions and offers a therapeutic release from mental clutter. Through journaling, you can reflect on your day, confront difficult feelings, and even develop healthier thought patterns.



## TYPES OF JOURNALING AND HOW THEY HELP MANAGE STRESS

Journaling isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. There are several types of journaling, each offering unique benefits depending on your needs. Here's a breakdown of the different journaling methods you can try:

- **Free-Writing Journaling: Clear Your Mind** The best way to let go of emotions is by writing freely. In this type of journaling, you write anything that comes to mind without worrying about rules, grammar, or structure. The goal is to eliminate emotional clutter and disorganized thoughts from your mind. Free writing allows you to release your feelings and provides instant relief, whether you're processing a challenging day or venting about a stressful exam.

- **Bullet Journaling: Stay Organized and Reduce Overwhelm** Bullet journaling combines organization with creativity. It's ideal for medical students who need to manage their time, track habits, and set goals. You can create daily to do lists, habit trackers, and even brainstorm ideas for future projects. Bullet journaling is a great way to tackle stress by staying organized and focused, which can significantly reduce feelings of being overwhelmed.
- **Daily Journaling: Track Your Progress** Daily journaling involves reflecting on each day's events and emotions. By writing a short entry at the end of the day, you create a log of your experiences and feelings. This practice helps you track personal growth over time, and by looking back on your entries, you may notice patterns or areas where you've made progress. It's a great way to build self-awareness and appreciate how far you've come.
- **Visual Journaling: Express Through Art** If you're more visually inclined or find it easier to express emotions through art, visual journaling is a fantastic option. This method involves using drawings, sketches, or even collages to document your experiences and feelings. For introverted or creatively minded medical students, visual journaling offers a unique outlet to express complex emotions that words may not fully capture.
- **Gratitude Journaling: Shift Your Focus to Positivity** When faced with personal hardships and academic pressure, it's simple to lose sight of life's good things. Whether it's opportunities that present themselves, small victories, or the support of friends, gratitude journaling helps you to concentrate on your blessings. You can improve your mood, lower your stress level, and change your perspective to one of positivity by regularly practicing gratitude.



Journaling provides a space to process these emotions and reflect on how you're coping. Whether you write about a difficult exam, a stressful patient interaction, or your financial worries, journaling helps you externalize your stressors. Once they're on paper, they don't seem as overwhelming.

Additionally, journaling can help you:

- **Control Your Emotions:** By putting your sentiments into writing, you can identify emotional trends and hone your emotional intelligence.
- **Lessen Anxiety:** Writing down your anxieties and concerns can help you focus and feel less anxious.
- **Break Negative thinking Cycles:** By keeping a journal, you can recognize obsessive or negative thinking patterns and have the chance to reframe them in a more constructive manner.
- **Encourage Self-Awareness:** By thinking back on your deeds and responses, you can have a better understanding of yourself, which promotes self-compassion and personal development.
- **Handle Traumatic Events:** Writing about traumatic events might help people process their feelings and relieve tension.

### MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH JOURNALING AS A MEDICAL STUDENT

During my first two years of medical school, I struggled with stress, loneliness, and academic pressure. I often felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of material and the high expectations I placed on myself. During these times, I turned to journaling as a way to release my thoughts and emotions. At first, I started by writing a few sentences at the end of each day, but over time, it became an essential part of my routine. I began with free-writing journaling to express my frustrations, and then added a bullet journal to stay organized. Looking back at my old journals, I can clearly see how I progressed emotionally and mentally.



### HOW JOURNALING CAN HELP YOU OVERCOME STRESS IN MEDICAL SCHOOL

Imagine this: You're preparing for an important exam, juggling multiple assignments, and feeling the weight of medical school responsibilities. The constant stress can quickly escalate into feelings of frustration, anxiety, or even burnout. Without a system in place, it's easy to lose sight of your mental health.

Imagine this: You're preparing for an important exam, juggling multiple assignments, and feeling the weight of medical school responsibilities. The constant stress can quickly escalate into feelings of frustration, anxiety, or even burnout. Without a system in place, it's easy to lose sight of your mental health.

#### JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR MANAGING STRESS

If you're new to journaling or looking for inspiration, here are some journal prompts that can help you manage stress:

- What caused me to feel stressed today?
- How did I feel physically and emotionally during the stressor?
- How did I react to the situation? Was my reaction healthy or unhealthy?
- What coping mechanisms did I use? Were they helpful?
- What can I do next time to handle this stressor more effectively?
- How can I reframe my negative thoughts into positive ones?



#### START JOURNALING TODAY: YOUR PATH TO LESS STRESS AND MORE CLARITY

Journaling is a straightforward but effective technique that can significantly improve stress management and foster personal development. You can make time for self-analysis, emotional release, and mental clarity by setting aside a short period of time each day.

Journaling can help you become a more resilient version of yourself, lower stress, and raise awareness while navigating life's obstacles or the demands of medical school. Try starting with a bullet notebook or a free-writing journal to get organized if you're feeling overburdened. Once you start writing down your ideas, you'll be shocked at how much lighter you feel. Keep in mind that journaling is about progress rather than perfection.

#### CONCLUSION

As a medical student, journaling is an easy and affordable technique to manage stress, advance personal growth, and promote mental health. You can track your personal development, learn more about your mental health, and create healthy coping mechanisms for the inevitable obstacles of medical school by making journaling a regular part of your day. Try it out and observe how it changes your experience.

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# THAT MORNING COFFEE MIGHT BE MAKING YOU TIRED: THE CAFFEINE PARADOX

The first in the morning, or to get rid of the afternoon boredom, and maybe even before a workout, many of us reach for a cup of coffee. Caffeine, the world's most popular psychoactive drug, is lauded for its ability to boost energy and alertness. But what if the very substance designed to invigorate you is also the reason for your feelings of fatigue, anxiety, and even causes a setback in your performance? This is the perplexing world of the caffeine paradox.

WRITTEN BY

LIYANAGE HIRUNI ALOKA  
DASANAYAKE

CLASS OF 2025

## INTRODUCTION

Caffeine's primary mechanism of action is by blocking adenosine, a neurotransmitter that promotes relaxation and sleepiness. By inhibiting adenosine, caffeine keeps you feeling awake and alert. It also stimulates the release of adrenaline, the "fight-or-flight" hormone, which can increase heart rate and blood pressure, contributing to that feeling of heightened energy. However, the body is remarkably adaptable. Chronic caffeine consumption can lead to tolerance, meaning that the same dose produces a diminished effect over time. To achieve the same level of wakefulness, you will eventually increase your caffeine intake, creating a cycle of dependence. And hence, the paradox starts to emerge



## HERE ARE SOME WAYS CAFFEINE CAN BACKFIRE

- **Increased Anxiety and Jitters:** While a moderate dose of caffeine can enhance focus, excessive amounts can trigger anxiety, nervousness, and the dreaded "jitters." This is because the surge in adrenaline can overstimulate the nervous system, leading to an agitated state rather than a state of calm alertness.

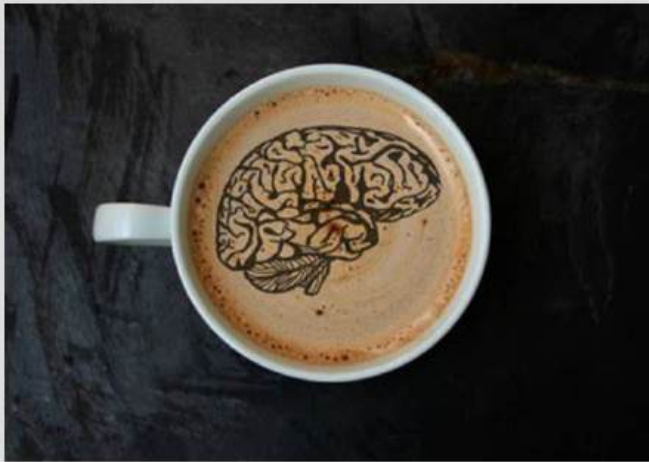
Studies have demonstrated a link between high caffeine intake and increased anxiety symptoms.

- **Rebound Fatigue and Energy Crashes:** The boost from caffeine is not sustainable. Once the effects wear off, you may experience a significant energy crash. This "rebound fatigue" can lead to a cycle of dependency, where you constantly need more caffeine just to feel "normal." Research shows that this withdrawal effect can manifest as increased fatigue and decreased alertness.
- **Disrupted Sleep:** Caffeine's effects can linger for hours, disrupting your sleep cycle and leading to poor sleep quality. Even if you think you are sleeping well, subtle disturbances to your sleep cycle can have a negative effect on overall sleep quality and your wakeful state during the day.



- **Reduced Cognitive Performance:** While caffeine can initially improve certain cognitive functions, chronic consumption and withdrawal can actually impair memory, attention, and decision-making.

The constant cycle of stimulation and withdrawal can take a toll on brain function. Studies have even shown that individuals who are sleep-deprived and then use caffeine to try and function perform worse than their rested counterparts in some cognitive tasks.



- Dehydration: Caffeine acts as a mild diuretic and increases your urine output. If you're not properly hydrated, this can contribute to headaches, fatigue, and brain fog, further undermining the benefits you were seeking

#### FIND YOUR BALANCE

The key to enjoying caffeine without experiencing its paradoxical effects is moderate intake with mindfulness. Here are a few tips:

- Take note or pay attention to your intake: Be aware of how much caffeine you consume throughout the day and consider cutting back. It is okay to skip a day or two without your morning coffee.
- The time-of-day matters: Avoid caffeine consumption late in the day to minimize sleep disruption. This is easier said than done, especially for medical students who study late at night with a full mug of coffee. So, you may try some alternatives that would have similar effects during your study sessions, for example, dark chocolate, matcha or green tea.

- Hydrate yourself adequately: Drink plenty of water to counteract the diuretic effects of caffeine.
- Listen to your body: Be attentive to how caffeine affects you personally and adjust your intake accordingly.
- Try caffeine-free strategies to stay energized: Consider non-caffeinated ways to boost energy, such as exercise, power naps, healthy snacks and aromatherapy.

#### CONCLUSION

Caffeine is a powerful stimulant that can provide a temporary boost, but it's not without its drawbacks. Understanding the paradoxical effects of caffeine can help you make informed decisions about your consumption habits, ensuring you're using it to enhance your life, not detract from it. The key is not to necessarily remove caffeine entirely from your life but instead to use it in a controlled way that works best for you and your body.

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