

1. If you are watching recorded lectures (Media Site), be cognizant of your pauses. Make sure a 50-minute lecture doesn't eat 3 hours of time! If this becomes a problem or issue you may want to watching lectures live.
2. I know some students watch lectures on double speed, but I am not sure I see the benefit in this. If it is your first time through the lecture, you should always watch on regular speed. If you have already watched the lecture, you only need to watch short segments pertaining to the concepts where you had a question or were confused. For example, if the professor says something confusing to you at the 20 minute mark, make a note of that to go back and watch the 3-5 minute segment again, maybe a couple of times, to get a better understanding and grasp of the material.
3. Before lecture, try to preview the PowerPoint for about 10-15 minutes. Remember you are not trying to memorize anything, take extensive notes, and don't worry if there are concepts, terms, and charts that you don't understand. The idea behind this is to begin to make connections with prior knowledge and familiarize yourself to some degree with the content prior to the lecture.
4. When taking notes, do so by hand (either on an Ipad, Service Pro, or even on an old-fashioned pad of paper) as opposed to typing notes. Research shows that handwriting notes is better for processing the information than typing. You don't need to write down every word either, instead focus on the professor's voice inflection, words or terms repeated, particular emphasis on a slide or chart, etc. and write down only that which adds significance to the PowerPoint or where you have a question, something is confusing, etc.
5. Please review the PowerPoint and your notes within a 24-hour period after lecture. Even if it is only for 15 minutes (quick review), research shows that reviewing the material soon after greatly aids in retention and minimizes the "curve of forgetting."
6. If not already following some type of time management or study schedule, I strongly recommend you consider doing so. If you need help in creating or developing your schedule, I can provide some resources and assistance with this, so just let me know.
7. With your schedule, practice the process known as "interleaving." With "interleaving" you study one course for about 50-55 minutes, take a short 5-10 minute break to give your brain a chance to rest and process the information, and then switch to another course. Interleaving greatly increases the chances that you will be able to maintain your focus and concentration during your study period. In order to also avoid distractions, please ensure you turn your cell phone "off" and make sure you are isolated in a space or room where no one will disturb you, there is no television, no pets, etc.

8. Do you engage with “active” or “passive” learning strategies? Most of us think we are “active” learners, however, the truth is many of the strategies we use: reading text, trying to memorize PowerPoint slides, going through an Anki deck, etc. are actually “passive” strategies. Instead, try more “active” strategies such as attempting to answer the learning objectives by handwriting out your answers, discussing the material in a study group or with a study partner, or drawing out concepts and information using visual organizers such as concept maps, diagrams, charts, etc. Working with practice questions (nice segue into our next point) can also be considered an “active” learning strategy.
9. How are you working with practice questions? Yes “how”, it’s not whether or not, because all medical students do, it’s just a matter of “how.” In other words, first, what is your process? You should have a well defined and articulated process for working through questions. If you need help with this or suggestions, once again, I can provide some resources for you. Another issue is “how often?” Don’t wait until the weekend before the exam, this is too late. I know students feel like they should “know” and “understand” the information before working on questions, however, you really don’t know if you “know” or if you “understand” until you put it to the test with practice questions. Then you can get a good gauge on where you are with the material, what you need to spend more time on, etc. I would recommend working through questions at least 2-3 times per week and at least once per week with a partner or small study group. It isn’t really how many questions (quantity), but your process, the actual questions themselves, and what you are getting out of it (quality).
10. Medical school is overwhelming enough, so there is no need to overwhelm yourself even more. I find students tend to do this in at least a couple of ways. The first is to use a multitude of supplemental, external resources. I remember having a conversation with a faculty member at a previous medical school where I worked. This faculty member had been to medical school 40-50 years ago. He told me, rather emphatically, that when he was in school all the students used was the textbook. Of course, not to be rude, I didn’t tell him, but I thought “back in your day all you had was the textbook!”

You are both fortunate and burdened in the sense that you have so many resources with Pathoma, Anki, Boards and Beyond, Sketchy, etc. Seems like there is a new resource every day! That being said, I typically recommend minimizing your supplemental resources to no more than one per course. More than that can often lead to information overload! This also applies to tutoring as well. We have multiple tutors for each course, so my advice is to pick the one with which you are most comfortable, and go with his or her sessions.

11. Don’t wait to reach out for help. This not only includes attending tutor sessions and contacting your Director of Academic Support ☺, but also reaching out to course

directors and other faculty who are experts on the material and can help clarify the material and answer specific questions you may have. Even if you don't have specific questions, just asking them how to approach the material, letting them know you might be struggling and seeing what tips, advice, and recommendations they might have can be very valuable.

12. How is everything else going? Don't under-estimate the impact that other forces at play can have on your studying. In my time working with medical students, there have been family illnesses, family deaths, relationship break-ups, personal illnesses, etc. Many of these when there was not a pandemic happening. COVID has put an additional strain on many of our emotions and mental health to say the least. If you need help in any way, please do not hesitate to reach out to our Counseling Center, Well Connect, and if you don't know how to do that, let me know and I will help you as much as I can.