

Healthy Living

Information from the American Chiropractic Association & Dr. Joel Fugleberg

Kinesiology Taping

What is Kinesiology Tape?

Originally developed by Kenzo Kase, DC, kinesiology taping is a therapeutic taping method that utilizes a latex-free elastic tape. Whereas most athletic tape is stiff and is used to hold muscles or joints in one position, kinesiology tape is stretchy—to serve as a gentle reminder to your body to hold your shoulder in a certain way or to keep a kneecap in line while biking or running.

There are four main functions of kinesiology tape:

1. Correcting muscle function. Kinesiology tape supports muscles during movement, and research has shown that it can provide a bit more stamina than the muscle alone.

2. Improving circulation of blood and lymph. Studies show that the tape increases the flow of both blood and lymph, which can help in the treatment of a number of conditions, including lymphedema, mastectomy recovery and swelling.

3. Correcting joint movement. The tape can be used to keep a joint, such as a knee, gliding and tracking smoothly while in use.

4. Relieving pain. The tape has an analgesic effect, similar to what has been described as the “mother’s hand effect.”

Because of its many functions, kinesiology tape can be worn both during and after activity. Kerri Walsh, the gold medalist in women’s beach volleyball at the Summer 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, wore the tape on her shoulder during her matches and Lance Armstrong wore kinesiology tape on his knee during the Tour de France.

Using Kinesiology Tape

Tape worn during competition is applied in the same way as tape used during everyday activities. Additionally,



kinesiology tape can be left on for several days at a time and can even be worn in the water as it’s water resistant. Tape should stay on pediatric and geriatric patients for about one day, but can remain on middle-aged people for four to five days.

Although kinesiology tape is very effective, it shouldn’t be relied on permanently. Experts agree that the tape isn’t a cure. Instead, it should be seen as a component of the rehabilitation process; it is not meant to replace a brace or a cast.

Some companies sell kinesiology tape in a roll and others offer pre-cut selections to fit on the shoulder, the knee or the back. The most common pre-cuts are “I” strips and “Y” strips, named for their resemblance to those letters. The strips are often sold in kits designed to fit on a certain body part or for a specific injury.



Dr. Joel Fugleberg is a chiropractor, fitness advocate, author, and health & wellness speaker in St. Paul, MN. His mission is to empower others to take a proactive approach in their health, through the use of chiropractic and other natural strategies, to achieve optimal function and wellness. With his background, he has helped thousands reach a higher level of health in his community.

If you would like to schedule a consultation, or to have Dr. Joel speak at your organization or event, he can be reached at the contact info listed below.

Lifestyle Chiropractic
821 Sibley Memorial Highway, Mendota Heights, MN 55118
651-406-4454 LifestyleChiroCenter.com



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