



Kinesiology Tape and Stability

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Question: Can you explain the use of kinesiology tape for stability or to slow atrophy ?

Additional Post: I have used kinesiology tape with the guidance of a PT. After a fall, the muscles in/around my knee were really painful. My PT showed me how to tape it and had me text her photos the next time I did it myself. She also asked me to make sure it was taped prior to my next appointment with my rehab doc so he could give it the OK (or not) – and he did. It doesn't affect how my brace fits at all. It's inexpensive, easy to put on and it REALLY helps the pain.



Dr. Bruno's Response: Kinesiology tape might help joint stability. A physical therapist would need to teach you how to tape and it would require you taping your joints every day. Bracing is easier and more effective but taping can be used to stabilize non-braced areas. Taping won't slow atrophy.

We consulted a PPS experienced Physical Therapist for some help with this question:

Do You Need Additional Support for your Joints? Have you heard about taping?

Janet Drake Whalen, PT, DPT

Physical Therapists may use tape as an adjunct to treatment to achieve a desired outcome. There are various types of tape and applications. The most commonly used are rigid or elastic.

You may have seen professional athletes with tape on their shoulders or knees. This type of taping is called Kinesio Taping (KT) which allows support to the muscles, joints and soft tissue without restricting range of motion. KT can be stretched up to 120+% of its original size lengthwise. With this elasticity it allows the athlete to participate in activities while they are recovering from a minor or moderate injury.



Kinesio taping has been shown to have positive physiological effects on the skin, lymphatic vessels, muscles, tendons and soft tissue. It helps to reduce pain and improve muscle function by enhancing weak muscle function and relax overused muscles.

KT is inexpensive and easy to use. I often teach patients how to apply it themselves.

A more rigid tape technique is McConnell Taping. This taping technique is often used in patients with [patellofemoral](#) pain syndrome (kneecap) or shoulder issues. Due to its rigidity and highly adhesive tape it can be worn up to 18 - 24 hours (longer if it doesn't get wet or isn't irritating to the skin). This technique consists of 2 different pieces of tape. The bottom tape which is directly on the skin is white and provides protection for the skin. The second piece of tape is rigid and provides support to the joint it covers. By providing this support to the muscles and fascia around the joint, complaints of pain can be significantly reduced. At the same time, patients become more aware of the proper positioning of their body parts in relation to muscles and joints.



In the shoulder, the tape assists in the position of the ball of the [humerus](#) in its socket also assisting in postural awareness. This taping technique is effective to support joints due to muscle weakness experienced by many polio survivors.

Tape should not be used on skin that is fragile or allergic to adhesives and skin should be monitored for several hours after application. If there is any redness or itching, the tape should be removed.