

## Tip of the Month Kinesiology Taping

Kinesiology Tape is a flexible elastic tape that can be applied to various parts of the body to potentially provide postural support to muscles and/or joints to relieve swelling/edema and discomfort.

### What it can do:

- Allows you to move freely and perform necessary movements like squatting and lifting without restricting your movement.
- Potentially reduces swelling or edema around a muscle or joint by the elastic tape “lifting” your skin and increasing circulation and lymph flow.
- Potentially relieves discomfort and relaxes an over-active muscle through the pressure of the elastic tape. o This is like rubbing your toe to control discomfort if you bump it.
- Potentially provide muscle support to help a dysfunctional/weak muscle work better. o This is like tapping someone’s upper back to remind them to stand more upright.



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## What it can NOT do:

- Most benefits of kinesiology tape are theoretical therefore the effects are all *potential* and not guaranteed.
- Tape alone does not cure or prevent injury.
- Although tape may relieve discomfort, it must be combined with other first aid strategies, stretches, exercises, practicing safe body mechanics and continued performance of wellness exercises.



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**Tell me more:**

**How to Apply It?**

*Take a look at this month's handout for pictures and descriptions of taping methods.*

*Basic application information:*

- The general rule for taping is between 25%-50% stretch on the tape in the area you have discomfort/dysfunction.
- Use less stretch (closer to 25%) for swelling, and more stretch (closer to 50%) for muscle support.
  - ✓ Some tape brands have stretch indicators on the tape
  - ✓ Otherwise you can get 50% stretch by stretching the tape fully, then releasing HALF of that. Release another HALF to get 25%.
- If you are unsure or not confident in applying this yourself, consult your prevention specialist.
- If you are interested in applying the tape to an area of your body not shown in the handout, consult your prevention specialist.



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### Helpful Hints:

- To prevent the tape from peeling off too quickly, apply to clean, DRY skin-no oils or lotions. If skin is hairy, please shave for optimal benefit and easy removal of tape.
- Apply stretch to the middle section of the tape with the muscle lengthened.
- Both ends lay flat with no stretch applied.
- If possible, apply 10-20 minutes BEFORE work or athletic activity to allow tape adhesive to activate.
- Activate tape adhesion by rubbing with your hand once the tape is applied.
- If your tape is not “pre-cut” be sure to round the edges of the tape to keep the edges from catching and peeling off (see photos in application handouts)
- After showering, dry tape by blotting with a towel.
- Tape can be worn for 2-4 days and still achieve benefits.
- Use a gentle oil/lotion on your skin when removing the tape to reduce irritating your skin or press down on the skin around the tape as you gently peel it off.



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### Who Should NOT Use Kinesiology Tape?

- Kinesiology Tape is generally safe for most common working people and athletes but due to the potential effects of increased circulation and applying adhesive to the skin, there are certain health conditions in which people should consult their health provider prior to use. Conditions include:
  - Heart failure
  - Severe Kidney disease
  - Cancer
  - Uncontrolled diabetes and neuropathy
  - Thin skin
  - Severe skin allergies/sensitive skin, known allergies to adhesive or redness and itching from kinesiology taping
  - Blood clots, clotting disorders, or hemophilia
  - Open wounds
  - Lymph node disorders
- If you have a serious medical condition not listed above, it is always best to consult your health care provider first.

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### Other common Kinesiology Tape Questions:

- Is this the same as using a back or wrist brace?
  - No. Kinesiology tape is not the same as a rigid brace. It is not intended to limit your motion, it should move WITH you and is intended to help you move better or use muscles properly.
- Will Kinesiology Tape guarantee I am safe from injury?
  - No. While it may reduce discomfort, the best way to prevent injuries is to perform wellness exercises and practice safe body mechanics.
- Where can I get Kinesiology Tape?

Your Prevention Specialist can tape you and train you for a limited number of sessions and then you can continue purchasing and applying it on your own. Tape can be purchased online: Amazon.com or stores like Walgreens, Target, Dick's Sporting Goods or The Big 5. There are numerous brands of kinesiology tape including KT Tape, Rock Tape and more. Web search [kinesiology tape](#) to find options