



## Kinesiology Taping

Kinesiology taping is a simple, comfortable and effective solution for many types of foot and ankle pain. Kinesiology tape is water resistant, yet breathable, allowing it to be worn for daily activity, exercise, and showering. It dries quickly and seldom causes skin irritation. Most kinesiology tape applications will last from 3-5 days.

When kinesiology tape is applied to the skin over an inflamed area, the stretch in the tape gently lifts the skin, creating a space between the skin and the tissues below. This creates an area of negative pressure, allowing both blood vessels and lymphatic vessels to dilate (open), increasing the circulation of both fluids. Improved blood flow enhances delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the injured tissues, accelerating the healing process. When lymphatic vessels dilate, the fluid that has collected in the injured area can drain away. This reduces swelling, which relieves pressure on the pain receptors providing immediate pain relief.

Additional mechanisms that come into play involve an intricate interplay between the body's sensory system, neurological system and muscular system. The ongoing, low level sensory stimulation from the tape on the skin activates pain gating mechanisms that assist in the relief of chronic pain. They also allow restoration of normal muscle activation, restoring strength and mobility in muscles that may have been inhibited by pain or injury.

Kinesiology taping may be used in combination with other modalities to maximize the overall treatment plan.

### **Wearing the Tape**

To dry tape that has become wet, pat gently with a towel. Do not use a hair dryer – the adhesive is heat-activated, and may become difficult to remove. Any ends that begin to peel can be trimmed with scissors to prevent further peeling. Socks should always be worn with the tape (except when showering) to avoid premature peeling of the tape, even in bed.

### **Dealing with Skin Irritation**

Kinesiology tape is made from cotton with a hypoallergenic acrylic adhesive. It contains no latex or medications, decreasing the likelihood of skin irritation. Individuals with extremely sensitive skin, however, may still experience rash, itching or irritation. The following products have been reported to minimize skin irritation when applied and allowed to dry prior to tape application: Benadryl® Itch Stopping Gel, Maalox®, and Tens Clean Coat Skin Wipes.

### **Removing the Tape**

Remove tape in the direction of hair growth, which is usually in a downward direction on the legs, ankles and feet. To minimize discomfort, press the skin at the end of the taped area while gently peeling tape back. Tape that is still strongly adhered to skin may be loosened by soaking with baby oil, olive oil or Perform Lift for 5-10 minutes before removing.

