

ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE<sup>®</sup>



**KINESIOLOGY  
TAPING  
GUIDE**



What is Kinesiology tape  
and how does  
Kinesiology tape work?

How to apply  
Kinesiology tape

Examples of application  
of UP Kinesiology tape  
for common injuries  
and conditions

# Introduction

Welcome to this guide to using Ultimate Performance (UP) Kinesiology tape. The guide contains general advice developed in consultation with various taping experts who work closely with UP. UP Kinesiology tape can be applied in a variety of methods which are flexible and adjustable to suit your needs. Kinesiology tape can be applied by you, health professionals or anybody else assisting you; the guide can be used as an introductory aid to application and could potentially reduce the need for regular appointments with health professionals. UP recommends that any aches, pains, strains and injuries should be assessed by a suitably qualified healthcare professional before initial tape application: this may be a valuable opportunity to experience tape application by a professional.

## SECTION A:

# What is Kinesiology tape and how does Kinesiology tape work?

Kinesiology taping originates in the science of kinesiology, based on the belief that the body's muscles are responsible for the movements of and in the body as well as being in control of other elements, such as circulation of the blood and body temperature. As a result of this, when muscles fail or are impaired other parts of the body are necessarily effected, thus putting their function at risk.

The principle of kinesiology is to treat the muscles to help the body heal itself naturally.

Kinesiology tape is a 100% cotton, hypoallergenic, latex free, non-restrictive elastic adhesive tape designed to have the same amount of stretch as human skin and provides a multitude of uses as a protective and rehabilitative taping technique. Applied over muscles, the main benefits are to; reduce pain and inflammation, improve circulation, relax and support over-used/tired/injured muscles, provide structural support to joints and muscle movement, assist healing and provide support to the injury site whilst allowing full range of movement. The taping methods can be preventative or rehabilitative to allow athletes to continue training and competing as injuries heal. The tape may be used with differing degrees of stretch depending on the desired effect of the taping.

Kinesiology taping is designed to assist and improve the body's natural healing process and has a number of methods of application and benefits of use, it is proposed to: (1) improve the localised effect of fluid circulation (blood and lymph); (2) decrease pain; (3) provide anatomical support; (4) enhance muscular and joint range of motion; (5) assist proprioception.

**(1) Impacting localised fluid circulation:** Once applied to the skin Kinesiology tape is reported to lift the upper layers of skin, creating more space

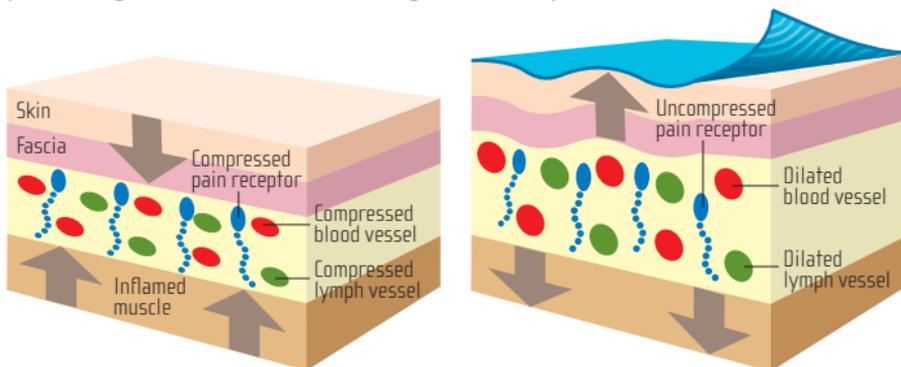
between the skin and underlying muscles. This space is believed to reduce pressure on the lymph channels and create more space for circulation, flow and improve lymph drainage through the taped area (figure 1). This can help decrease swelling and pain in injured areas. It also helps improve blood flow circulation, increased blood flow to and from the muscle increases the presence of oxygen and nutrients to assist with repair of damaged tissues and accelerates the breakdown and removal of waste product when muscles are tired.

**(2) Decrease pain:** Kinesiology tape relieves physical and neurological pain, the tapes lifting action helps to relieve pressure on the pain receptors located under the skin (see figure 1 below).

**(3) Provides anatomical support + (4) enhanced/normal muscular and joint range of motion + (5) assists proprioception:** Kinesiology tapes unique elastic properties ensure that muscles and joints are closely supported during all activities, discourages harmful movements whilst still allowing a safe and healthy range of motion. Different applications of Kinesiology tape can also be used to improve joint alignment and can improve the function of a joint by influencing opposing muscle groups and joint mobility.

Kinesiology tape can be worn for up to five days during intense exercise, swimming, showering and bathing as the tape is quick drying.

Figure 1. **Potential skin lifting effect of Kinesiology tape promoting fluid flow and decreasing tissue compression.**



## SECTION B:

# How to apply Kinesiology tape

This is an introductory guide of basic application methods. Kinesiology tape can be applied by you, health professionals and or anybody else assisting you, this guide can be used as an aid to application and potentially reduce the need for regular appointments with health professionals.

UP reiterate that injuries should be assessed by suitable qualified healthcare professionals before initial tape application, this may be a valuable opportunity to experience tape application by a professional.

- It is easier to remove the tape from the backing than the backing from the tape.
- Try not to handle the adhesive side of the tape (see figure 2 opposite).
- When and where necessary, use an **anchor tab**: fold and then tear a line 2-3 inches (5-7cm) in from each end of the piece of tape to be applied. These end tabs should be applied with no stretch to anchor the tape to the skin.
- Before applying, rub the anchor tabs for a couple of seconds to activate the adhesive and ensure the anchor tabs adhere to the skin immediately. The remainder of the tape's adhesion will be activated by natural body warmth once applied.



**End-to-end application:** Remove tape from the backing and apply one anchor tab to the skin with no stretch. Apply the centre of the tape with the desired degree of stretch, peeling backing away as you go, when the opposing anchor tab is reached, remove the backing and apply with no stretch.



**Centre first application:** Remove the backing from the centre of the tape, leave the anchor tab backing attached, apply the tape from the centre of the application area with the desired degree of stretch then remove the backing on the anchor tabs and apply to the skin with no stretch.

## **SECTION C:**

**Examples of application  
of UP Kinesiology tape for  
common injuries and conditions**

- 1 ACHILLES TENDON TAPING**
- 2 CALF TAPING**
- 3 IT BAND TAPING**
- 4 KNEE TAPING**
- 5 SHIN SORENESS /  
COMPARTMENT SYNDROME  
TAPING**
- 6 PLANTAR FASCIITIS TAPING**
- 7 POSTERIOR THIGH PAIN /  
HAMSTRING STRAIN /  
SCIATICA TAPING**
- 8 LOWER BACK TAPING**

# 1 ACHILLES TENDON TAPING

**A** Dorsiflex the foot to stretch the achilles. Anchor the tape on the sole of foot and apply the tape vertically, with the desired stretch, up to mid-calf. Smooth the tape around the achilles tendon area. (see section B: "How to apply Kinesiology tape").

**B** Apply a second strip with no stretch horizontally across the tendon at a level just above the ankle bone or where the achilles is most painful.



## 2 CALF TAPING

**A** Apply a strip of tape vertically from above ankle to just below knee applying a 50% stretch to middle of tape and utilising anchor points at each end (see “How to apply Kinesiology tape”).



**B** Apply a second strip horizontally across the most painful area of the calf with 50% stretch in the middle and anchor point at each end.



### 3 IT BAND TAPING

**A** Apply a strip of tape with no stretch from the hip bone vertically down to just below the knee (see “How to apply Kinesiology tape”) using anchoring points at each end.



**B** Apply a second strip horizontally across the outer leg just above the knee with 50% stretch in the middle.



## 4 KNEE / PATELLA TAPING

**A** Flex the knee to a 90 degree angle. Split the tape 3-4" at one end. Using that opposite end, anchor and apply the tape vertically down from mid-thigh down to the knee. Apply each side of the split around the patella (see diagram). No stretch required on application.

**B** It is optional to apply a vertical strip directly below the kneecap with a 50% stretch, use anchor tabs at each end.



## 5 SHIN SORENESS AND COMPARTMENT SYNDROME TAPING

**A** Dorsiflex (lift) foot. Anchor tape from foot first – along shin directly over the affected area. No stretch (see “How to apply Kinesiology tape”).

**B (Optional)** Apply a second strip across the worst affected area with 50% stretch in the middle.



## 6 PLANTAR FASCIIITIS TAPING

**A** Dorsiflex (lift) foot. Anchor the tape to the heel and apply along the sole of the foot to the base of the toes with no stretch.

It is optional to cut the initial piece into strips to be applied up the sole of the foot (as per diagram).

**B** Apply a second strip anchored to the top of the foot and wrapped from the medial to the lateral side to provide additional support to the arch.



## 7 POSTERIOR THIGH PAIN / HAMSTRING STRAIN / SCIATICA TAPING



**A** Anchor just below the buttock fold and apply tape vertically down, with a 50% stretch, to the ankle (see “How to apply Kinesiology tape”).

**B** Apply a horizontal strip across the broadest part of the hamstring with a 50% stretch in the middle.



## 8 LOWER BACK TAPING

**A** Bend forwards from the waist. Apply two vertical strips with anchors either side of the top of the buttock cleft and apply upwards either side of the spine to a mid-point with less than 25% stretch (see "How to apply Kinesiology tape").



**B** Apply a horizontal strip across the most painful area with a 50% stretch.



# Kinesiology Tape – skin irritation

Kinesiology tape is a 100% cotton, hypoallergenic, latex free, non-restrictive elastic adhesive tape designed to have the same amount of stretch as human skin and provides a multitude of uses as a protective and rehabilitative taping technique.

**1 Too much stretch in the tape.** Kinesiology tape is already stretched on to the paper backing so an effective stretch can be achieved even when applying without tension. When kinesiology tape is applied with too much stretch it can pull on the skin causing discomfort as it attempts to contract back to its un-stretched state. Be careful not to overstretch the tape on application. In general, the larger the area being taped the less additional stretch is necessary during application.

**2 Anchor tabs do not require stretch.** The anchor tabs of the tape are the final 2-3" at the end of every strip. If these ends are stretched during application they will pull on the skin with every movement, in time this can cause redness and irritation. **Always leave the end 3-2" with no stretch.**

**3 Hair follicle irritation in unshaved areas.** The benefits of kinesiology taping are achieved via direct contact between the tape and the skin. Constant movement of the skin can cause hair follicles to become irritated: it is recommended that excess hair close to skin level be cut close to the skin before applying kinesiology tape.

**4 Skin irritation in shaved areas.** Shaving removes the uppermost layer of skin exposing fresh skin which will be more sensitive. It is recommended that shaving should be performed 24 hours before tape is applied or is to be avoided in regularly taped areas. Clippers can be used as they cause less skin irritation.

**5 Skin preparation.** Remove all moisturizing creams and lotions from the skin and wash with soap and water prior to taping. This preparation will improve tape adherence and should reduce the likelihood of skin irritation.



**UP Kinesiology Tape** is available as 50mm x 5m rolls in a range of colours, either in continuous form or pre-cut into 250mm sections.

**UP7001**

black

**UP7002**

pink

**UP7003**

red

**UP7004**

light blue

**UP7005**

skin



**UP7021**

black  
pre-cut

**UP7022**

pink  
pre-cut

**UP7023**

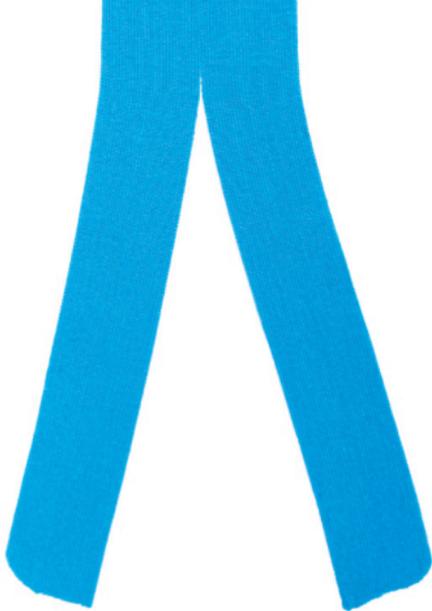
red  
pre-cut

**UP7024**

light blue  
pre-cut

**UP7025**

skin  
pre-cut



A rehabilitative taping technique applied over muscles to reduce pain and inflammation, relax overused tired muscles and support muscles in movement. Kinesiology taping is designed to improve the body's natural healing process by helping to increase natural blood flow around the muscle. The wave pattern adhesive backing makes it non-restrictive, allowing for a full range of motion.



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