



# PERFORMING ARTS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



**ORTHOPAEDIC SECTION**

AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION



American Physical Therapy Association  
*The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.*

## Kinesio™ Tape – CITATION SUMMARY

**SEPTEMBER, 2008**

As I watched the Olympic competitions last month, I was intrigued to see Kinesio™ tape worn by several athletes, including volleyball gold medalist, Kerri Walsh. Various news casters and bloggers described the tape as increasing blood flow through the muscles, assisting lymphatic drainage, giving support like a flexible brace, facilitating weak muscles with neurological awareness or proprioception, or providing pain relief. Spurred by the coverage that the taping was given, I selected this as our September annotated bibliography.

According to one website (<http://www.scienceofsocceronline.com/2008/08/cutting-edge-research-effectiveness-of.html>), "Kinesio™ tape is designed to give support and stability to the joints and muscles without affecting circulation and range of motion. The tape is made of an elastic woven tape that allows it to stretch 30-40% from its resting length, in order to simulate the elastic properties of skin. The theory is that it lifts the skin away from the muscle fascia, facilitating blood flow and drainage of fluids by the lymph system. The advantage of the tape is that it can be worn for long periods of time, for days or even weeks."

Unfortunately, a literature search in Medline, CINAHL, and AHMED found little to substantiate these claims. While there is evidence that taping in general (McConnell taping, athletic tape, etc.) may have some effect on patella femoral pain, plantar heel pain, etc., Kinesio™ tape has not been shown to be any more effective than traditional taping or no treatment. At \$15/roll, it is a costly alternative.

Performing artists, like athletes will try anything to improve their performance or game, and hence, are very susceptible to the placebo effect. Until we have strong, blinded, peer reviewed research, there is little scientific support for the use of Kinesio™ tape. Please judge for your selves.

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